

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS  
AND ITS PLACE IN LIFE

M. K. BRADBY

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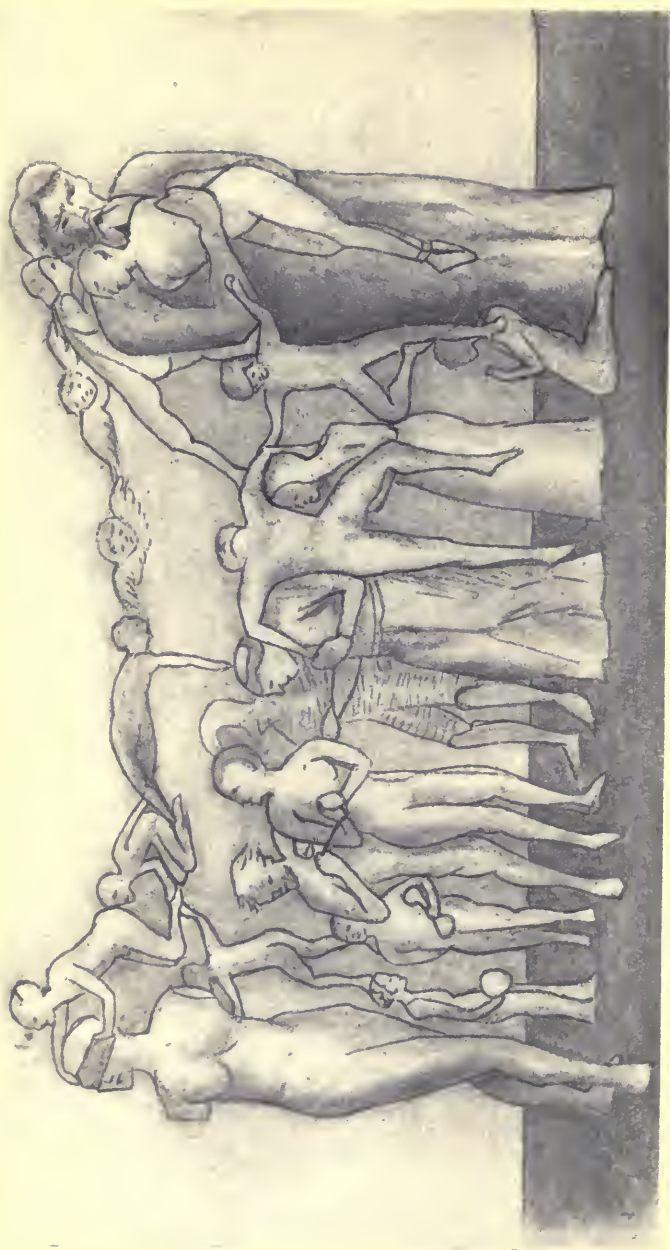
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EXAMPLE OF UNCONSCIOUS DRAWING. See page 5.

# PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

## AND ITS PLACE IN LIFE

BY

M. K. BRADBY

“Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig.”—

MARCUS AURELIUS, VII. 59. *Trans. G. LONG.*

“For out of the heart come evil designs, murder, adultery, sexual vice, stealing, false witness, and slander.”—

*St. Matthew xv. 19. Trans. MOFFAT.*

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## PREFACE

SINCE the publication of Freud's "Studien über Hysterie" (with Breuer) in 1895 and of his "Die Traumdeutung" in 1900 (English translation 1913), the subject of Psycho-analysis has been claiming an ever increasing amount of attention, both from the medical profession and also from the thoughtful public. There is a certain danger, on the one side, of its being treated from the somewhat narrow point of view inseparable from any particular branch of knowledge, and, on the other, of its being taken out of the realm of serious and scientific thought by amateurs who, "rushing in where angels fear to tread," think themselves competent to discuss a highly technical subject without the essential training in its technique, viz., a thorough course of psycho-analysis under the guidance of an expert analyst.

A study such as the one presented here is, therefore, greatly to be welcomed. It introduces the subject from the point of view of a layman, who is at the same time a serious student of psychology, of psycho-analysis, and of human life in general as viewed intimately in more than one social stratum, for since taking the Mental and Moral Science Tripos at Cambridge Miss Bradby has been engaged in educational and social work.

The psycho-analyst proper, whether he agrees or not with the opinions expressed, can only be grateful

for such a book, raising as it does interesting and important questions which have not yet engaged his attention. The author's very individual outlook on life seems to me to enhance the stimulating qualities of the work.

I share with her the belief that in this new branch of mental science we have another means of approaching both the individual and the social problem. Psycho-analysis presents but one aspect of the work to be done. We aim at a reconstruction of life which can only be conceived as a psycho-synthesis. But we must not fall into the error of superficial minds who would step over the analytical side and arrive, as it were, by magic at the synthetic.

CONSTANCE E. LONG.

2, HARLEY PLACE,  
N.W.1.

*April 2, 1919.*

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS book aims at four things. It attempts an answer to the increasing number of people who want to know something about psycho-analysis and who find the existing literature some of it too brief and some of it too difficult. It discusses certain questions raised in the mind of the ordinary educated man or woman who has begun to study psycho-analysis and is puzzled ; such questions for instance as "where does it lead," "how does it fit in with the desire to be a moral human being, and with the ideas entertained by modern scientists." It supplies the reader with some notion of how to arrive at the meaning of his own dreams, and lastly, it hopes to induce psycho-analysts and psychologists to study each other's works.

The unconscious mind is viewed in its character of normal but undeveloped mind, as well as in its better-known character of abnormal and neurotic, and an attempt is made to expound some of the teachings of modern anthropology and to link them up with those of psycho-analysis.

I have nothing new to say, but I am impressed with the profound importance to thought, and consequently to life in general, of the discoveries of Freud, their development by Jung and the Zurich school, and of that theory of human progress reached by modern psychologists through the study of mind as it develops in the race, as

well as the individual : a theory which has been lucidly set out by Professor L. T. Hobhouse. It is from the books of these three writers and of Miss Jane Harrison that I have gathered most of the notions here advanced, and above all from the conversation and papers of Dr. Constance Long. Where I venture to disagree with any of them it may be from a failure to understand them ; but, after all, truth is best served by each sincere student of human life describing the truths he sees. Thought is advanced by the exposure of our own and the correction of each other's errors. The views here set out make no claim to any sort of completeness ; they aim at stimulating thought and challenging discussion. Where they appear dogmatic it is from an effort to be concise, and the reader's indulgence is asked on this account.

The future influence of psycho-analysis on psychology proper I imagine as bearing a resemblance to that on Chemistry of Pasteur's discovery of the connection between chemical structure and the polarisation of light. As Pasteur himself said, he "opened one of the weightiest, most astonishing chapters in science, one which offers to physiology (and, it may be added, to chemistry) a horizon, new, far distant, yet quite distinct." Modern psychologists see every act of mind as possessing three fundamental aspects, those of knowing, feeling, and will (or conation). So far, they have concentrated research upon the first—knowing or cognition. The great body of knowledge they have built up of the psychology of cognition remains untouched by psycho-analytic theories, but when we turn to feeling and conation the matter is different. Here they have done no more than make a timid start, lacking the clue to direction which psycho-analysis will henceforth supply. Already the psychology of the emotions, even of so brilliant and original a thinker as William James, is almost as out of date as a medieval book on natural history.

One may look forward hopefully to a day in the near

future when psychologists, who are on the whole amongst the least prejudiced of people, will give the views of psycho-analysts of the schools of both Freud and Jung the serious consideration they deserve, and when psycho-analysts on their side will turn their attention to those important factors in the unconscious which they overlook. They are too much inclined to interpret the higher in terms of the lower, to explain the advanced by a reference to the rudimentary. They have found man's repressed appetites and the conflict between conventional morality and sexual desire, but they have not yet devoted equal attention to his higher interests which are also to be found in the unconscious mind—interests which man does not share with the animals—to the longing after knowledge and beauty and power for their own sakes and the desire for moral goodness apart from any particular system of morality. Since man became aware of his own aims these things have been recognised as amongst the ruling passions of humanity, and they are not sexuality, important though sexuality may be.

All genuine men of science have much to learn from each other, and the generality of mankind has much to learn from psychologists, while nowadays even philosophy has dismounted from her pedestal and become the friend and fellow student of the man in the street, admitting that her subject-matter in homely guise has always formed one of the great interests of the multitude. This conviction has emboldened me to write, and this book is an attempt to put forward certain views and discuss certain questions on the meeting ground of the man of science and the man in the street.



I

THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND



# I

## THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

### CHAPTER I

THE REPRESSED UNCONSCIOUS MIND AS SEEN IN THE  
NEUROTIC, THE MEDIUM, THE ARTIST AND THE  
NORMAL PERSON

*"What do I see now, suppose you, there where you see rock around us?"*—(St. John *log.*) R. BROWNING.

WHAT is meant by "the unconscious mind"?

Our present state of knowledge does not allow us to attempt a definition, but some idea of the meaning of the term may be gained by passing in review typical cases in which it is employed. Accordingly it is proposed in this and the following chapter to bring before the reader's notice examples of the kind of thing psycho-analysts have in view when they speak of "the unconscious." These examples will be chosen from three fields: "the unconscious" of psycho-analysis, "the subliminal" of psychical research, and lastly from certain everyday experiences of ordinary people.

First let us glance at the so-called "unconscious" of the psycho-analyst. *Psycho-analysis* is a method of curing functional nervous disorders, which has been evolved by certain nerve specialists who were dissatisfied

with the results of hypnotic treatment.<sup>1</sup> It is a method based upon the assumption that every neurotic symptom has its origin and explanation in the background of the patient's mind. This explanation is unknown to the patient himself, but can be discovered by him through reference to that part of his mind which is active in his dreams. The symptom is, as it were, a little bit of his dream life thrust into his waking life, of his unconscious mind into his conscious. The psycho-analyst follows up the clue which the symptom gives ; under his guidance the patient reveals to himself the contents and mode of working of a sphere of his own mind to which he was a stranger, that part whereby his dreams are woven, his nervous symptoms formed.

Works on psycho-analysis employ technical terms, but the actual things of which they treat are familiar to us in ordinary life on both sides of the border-line of sanity. The "unconscious mind" to which they introduce us is the source of dreams, visions and trances, of queer fancies, unreasoning fears, hobbies, and little ways, of strange and erratic behaviour, of absent-mindedness and fixed ideas.

When we turn to *Psychical Research* we find some of the same material treated from a different point of view.<sup>2</sup> Here a scientific inquiry is pursued into the nature and origin of striking and mysterious "psychic phenomena." The psycho-analyst encounters some of these phenomena in the course of his efforts to cure nervous illness, the student of psychical research in the course of his inquiry as to what strange things actually occur and what is their scientific explanation. 'We read in the Society's

<sup>1</sup> In *functional* nervous disease the actual physical apparatus of brain and nerves is comparatively sound, but its working is deranged. In *organic* disease, some definite injury to the structure prevents it from working properly. So far as we know, no mental impression can cure a cut nerve or a broken bone, but some of the pain accompanying these may be functional and so susceptible to mental treatment. See A. T. Schofield, "The Force of Mind."

<sup>2</sup> See a paper by Dr. Constance Long in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research. Vol. XXX, July, 1918.

*Proceedings*, amongst other things, of the doings of spiritualistic mediums, of people in the hypnotic trance and in what are best known to the layman as states of double personality; we read of automatic writing and painting, of visions seen by crystal-gazers and clairvoyants. All these are evidence of the mind's activity below the threshold of consciousness. The "subliminal" of psychical research is identical with the "unconscious" of psycho-analysis.

In both these fields of inquiry the experiences dealt with are those of abnormal people, but we cannot fail to be struck by their resemblance to certain common experiences of everyday life. There would seem to be no clear line of demarcation between the healthy person and the neurotic, the normal and the "sensitive" (or person with mediumistic powers). The sanest of us knows what it is to dream, to have fits of absent-mindedness, unaccountable lapses of memory, unreasoning fears; and most of us at some time or other have seen or heard things which were not there. The illustrations which follow of the workings of the unconscious mind are taken from its normal and abnormal states alike, showing how the one state merges into the other.

It is not unusual to hear someone confronted with the subject declare that he has no unconscious mind. One speedy method of convincing such a sceptic is to lead him to produce *visual fantasies from the unconscious*. Most people see faces in the fire, or, like Polonius, strange creatures in the clouds, but on investigation it would be found that each of us sees different forms, though it be the same fire and the same cloud into which we gaze.<sup>1</sup> This fact may be strikingly brought home to us by means of a simple process. Let anyone take a sheet of paper and a bit of soft, coloured chalk, cover the paper with rough shading, then put down the chalk and simply look. With a pencil he may catch

<sup>1</sup> Blake and Mrs. Blake saw different "faces in the fire." See "Wm. Blake," by Arthur Symonds, 1907, p. 48.

and outline some of the forms that will appear and disappear from his view. No two people see the same thing. Some produce apparently insignificant scribbles or crude and childish outlines, others rhythmical designs; some grotesque and horrible faces, others a jumble of fragmentary objects mingled with geometrical figures. Leonardo da Vinci made the same discovery. Instructing his pupils in the principles of the painter's art he wrote:

"I will not refrain from setting among these precepts a new device for consideration which although it may appear trivial and almost ludicrous, is nevertheless of great utility in arousing the mind to various inventions. And this is that if you look at any walls spotted with various stains or with a mixture of different kinds of stones, if you are about to invent some scene you will be able to see in it a resemblance to various different landscapes adorned with mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, plains, wide valleys, or various groups of hills. You will also be able to see divers combats and figures in quick movement, and strange expressions of faces, and outlandish costumes, and an infinite number of things which you can then reduce into separate and well conceived forms. With such walls and blends of different stones it comes about as it does with the sound of bells, in whose clanging you may discover every name and word that you can imagine."<sup>1</sup>

It is here suggested that what each sees in the chalked paper and what Leonardo saw in the stained wall are largely the product of the unconscious mind. Leonardo used these fantastic images as material for his conscious mind to work upon; the unconscious mind of the born artist, when he is in the mood, leads him to see in any blurred and homogeneous mass visions of grandeur and beauty, of terror and grace, which do not linger, but fuse into each other.<sup>2</sup> The object presented to consciousness forms a basis or substratum upon which the unconscious moulds or weaves these images.

We may notice a continuous gradation of visual images in which the part played by the object looked at grows

<sup>1</sup> "Leonardo da Vinci's Note-books," edited by Edward McCurdy, 1906, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the paintings of the cubists, vorticists, etc. See "Cubism," by Gleizes and Metzinger (Fisher Unwin, 1913), especially p. 83.

less while the part supplied by the unconscious fantasy increases. The child beguiles a dull sermon by gazing at the mysterious figures which lurk in the veining of the marble pulpit; William Blake, the visionary artist, saw imaginary portrait-heads before him and copied them on to paper;<sup>1</sup> the spiritualistic medium draws "separate and well-conceived forms" without knowing what he is drawing, it may be in the dark. A well-known medium, David Duguid, who produced drawings in this way, on one occasion reproduced certain illustrations to a family Bible recently published and seen by him. The unconscious plagiarism was brought home to him by a threatened legal action.<sup>2</sup>

As with visual images, so with speech, oral or written; we may trace the increasing preponderance of the unconscious contribution along a similar course. Automatic drawing, we have seen, is sometimes done in the dark, the executant not knowing what his pencil is producing. Similarly, in *speech from the unconscious*, one may produce words and phrases and even a long discourse without knowing what one is saying. Speech of this kind, proceeding from levels of the mind which remain unconscious, is uttered by people in their sleep, in delirium, while coming-to after an anæsthetic and when intoxicated whether with drugs or emotion, in short, when the speaker is beside, beyond or beneath himself. Here the unconscious has it all its own way, but slighter indications of its activity are to be noticed in everyday life whenever we blurt out things we did not intend to say, make slips of the tongue or are bothered with words or phrases that run in the head.

The examples so far given enable us to recognise a distinction between the so-called conscious and unconscious spheres of the mind. Each exhibits the same material, but treated differently. That material

<sup>1</sup> "Wm. Blake," p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> See "Direct Phenomena of Spiritualism," by E. T. Bennett, p. 30. "The Shilling Library of Psychical Literature and Enquiry," No. IV.

is supplied by external objects presented to the senses, facts of experience, along with their corresponding memories. The individual, who for the time being is living in the unconscious, reacts to sensations and ideas spontaneously, automatically, instinctively, without knowing what he is doing; his perceptions and mental images have little correspondence with objective facts, but close correspondence with his subjective feelings. When he is conscious his perceptions have a closer correspondence with objective facts, he knows more or less clearly what he is doing and he brings his actions under the control of the will.

The distinction between the two spheres is sometimes strikingly shown in the course of recovering consciousness after an anæsthetic. A psycho-analytic patient described such an experience as follows: "At first I found myself talking and I was merely an observer, listening to what I was saying, and rather shocked at some of the things I heard. Then I tried to take control of my speech, at first unsuccessfully, but with more and more success as I experienced a series of slight jerks at each of which I became more awake. To start with, I found my head was wagging itself. Then I could stop it wagging, but directly I began to wag it, it ran away with me and wagged itself. Then I could start it wagging, and control it within limits, much as one drives a frisky horse. Finally, I was awake and could control it altogether. My tongue wagged in a similar manner." Here we see the factors of the conscious mind, purposive and controlling, asserting themselves gradually over those of the unconscious, impulsive and automatic. The specific quality of the sensations seems to change along with the increasing control of the will.

Just as visual fantasies are of use to the artist, so is speech from the unconscious to the painter in words. Many people who are not poets compose verses in their dreams, and when these are caught and studied they are seen to exhibit some of the characteristics of the

magical passages of inspired poetry. They appeal to their creator in the dream as full of meaning, vague, unfathomable and elusive, like that of music. They deal in clang associations, alliteration and repetition. They are mostly doggerel, but not dull doggerel such as is deliberately composed.

Here are some typical dream-lines, the creation of one who throughout a long life neither made verse nor appreciated it :

“ On the shores  
Where the Mogadores  
Run swiftly iftly by.”

Compare the wonderful lines of Rossetti written during music.<sup>1</sup>

“ O what is this that knows the road I came  
The flame turned cloud the cloud returned to flame  
The lifted shifted steeps and all the way ? ”

We feel it was Rossetti's unconscious mind which supplied that last line.

We find the same mysterious depth of meaning in the well-known lines from Keats in which he speaks of

“ magic casements opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn.”<sup>2</sup>

The student of the unconscious mind thinks he recognises passages characteristic of it with their element of the unexpected either in the words used or (as with George Meredith) in the images described. He finds a treasure-house of unconscious gems in the poetry of Shelley, Francis Thompson, Henry Vaughan, and many others, but we are on safer ground in quoting Coleridge's “Kubla Khan,” since we have his word for it that he dreamed the poem and wrote it down, so

<sup>1</sup> Given in Ward's “British Poets.”

<sup>2</sup> “Ode to a Nightingale.”

much as he could remember, on waking. He dreamed of

“A damsel with a dulcimer  
Singing of Mount Abora.”

\* \* \* \* \*

and says :—

“Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight ’twould win me  
That with music loud and long  
I would build that dome in air  
That sunny dome ! Those caves of ice !  
And all who hear should see them there,  
And all should cry Beware ! Beware !  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair.  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.”

*Writing from the unconscious*, like drawing and speaking, passes through a gradation in which the conscious element diminishes and the unconscious grows. Everyone whose pen flows easily occasionally finds himself writing what he did not intend. He mis-spells a familiar word, omits, repeats or changes a phrase without noticing. Freud narrates how a patient of Dr. Brill’s wished to get out of an appointment which he dreaded. Consciously, he was polite and intended to write that he was unable to keep his appointment “owing to unforeseen circumstances,” but the unconscious, which, says Freud, does not lie, guided his pen so that he actually wrote “owing to foreseen circumstances.” Freud also quotes a case of a public man vindicating his sincerity in a newspaper article, who called witness to the fact that he had always “acted in a *selfish* manner for the good of the community”—a slip of the pen which passed into print unnoticed.<sup>1</sup>

In the above cases the unconscious took control of

<sup>1</sup> Freud, “Psycho-pathology in Everyday Life,” 1914.

the pen for a single word, but there have been well-authenticated instances in which it controlled whole passages and even books. William Blake again furnishes an example. Some of his prophetic works were written, as he said, "from dictation."<sup>1</sup> He did not know what his pen was about to write. Here is a specimen of the sort of thing it wrote :

" For when Urizen shrunk away  
From Eternals, he sat on a Rock,  
Barren—A Rock which himself,  
From redounding fancies had petrified.  
Many tears fell on the Rock,  
Many sparks of vegetation.  
Soon shot the pained root  
Of Mystery under his heel :  
It grew a thick tree : he wrote  
In silence his Book of Iron ;  
Till the horrid plant bending its boughs,  
Grew to roots when it felt the earth,  
And again sprung to many a tree." <sup>2</sup>

To give another example from our own times. Miss Bramston, the authoress, at one period of her life wrote dialogues with her automatic hand, of the purport of which she knew nothing until she took them up and read them. At first she was inclined to think them marvellous, but she soon formed the opinion that they had a purely personal and subjective value and could appeal to nobody but herself.

The following is a specimen. The principal speaker in the dialogues was one "B. P." He professed to be the spirit of a boy friend who had died twelve or fourteen years earlier, but after a time she found "that he was but a personage of my automatic romance."

B. P. speaks of "the other side" and says:

"When people who are not good come here they

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Symons, *op. cit.*, 147.

<sup>2</sup> "Ahania," Chap. III, 3. See Oxford Edition of "British Poets," Wales, 1913, p. 344.

have a great deal to learn before the stripping of the sheath, and they may or may not submit to discipline. If they refuse to submit they are allowed to choose their own sphere of life, and those who are sottish and those who are indolent choose the earth to hover about their former Reli- (*sic*) spheres of interest which are the only interests they have and those who are sensual and malicious try to enter again into the bodies of human spirits and possess them——. When you wish murderers should be sent into the next life as they are, they are more likely to produce more murders than less.”<sup>1</sup>

We have touched upon automatic drawing, speech and writing because they furnish plain examples of the kind of mental activity we seek to illustrate, but the unconscious may be operative in any sphere of human action. The sleep-walker performs various kinds of acts unconsciously, the hypnotised person does, within limits, whatever is suggested to him, the patient who is suffering from a “compulsion neurosis” may feel impelled, he knows not why, to do things of one sort or another, such as collecting little bits of string or counting the ticks of the clock. It appears that actions of this kind spring direct from that part of the mind which is not under the control of the will, and if we look closely we shall find that many of the things we do have in them an element of such unconscious compulsion. We imply this whenever we tax people with a mania or a phobia, such as the dust mania, the mania for hoarding, the phobia against flies and cats. We tax them unjustly, however, where their actions are guided by conscious deliberate purpose, in accordance with and not against their better judgment.

We have now indicated one set of facts we have in view when we speak of the unconscious mind; but the unconscious has two aspects, as “repressed” and

<sup>1</sup> *The Occult Review*, July, 1905.

as "primitive," and so far we have taken examples which emphasise the former aspect only.

Psycho-analysts have been studying neurotic symptoms and how to cure them by an understanding of their place in the mind of the patient. Incidentally, they have learnt a great deal about the unconscious mind of man in general, chiefly on its repressed side, *i.e.* about those contents of unconsciousness which might be conscious but are expelled from consciousness because they are painful.

Meanwhile, anthropological psychologists have been studying the nature and development of mind in primitive man. In so doing they too have learnt a great deal about the unconscious mind of man in general, chiefly on its undeveloped side, *i.e.* about the contents of unconsciousness which may become conscious as the result of education but which are as yet incapable of clear realisation. In the next chapter we shall turn our attention to a sphere of primitive mental activity, where, it will be claimed, the unconscious though less discussed is of even greater importance for everyday life.

Before leaving this part of the subject, however, we will give a brief glance at the opinions held by modern psychologists which directly bear upon it.

Modern psychologists recognise the significance of those observed phenomena classed under the term "unconscious mind," but they are not agreed as to the best name to give them. The "unconscious mind" implies a contradiction in terms, for mind, in common parlance, means consciousness, and consciousness which is unconscious is nonsense. The logical difficulty is not removed by the "subliminal self" or the "sub-conscious" mind of Myers and James, for at some point or other they too imply the existence of a self or a mind which is not in any degree conscious. The unsatisfactory name reflects our vague and unsatisfactory knowledge about the thing for which it stands;

it challenges to further discrimination. We accept it provisionally as a working hypothesis which enables us to talk about a group of facts we wish to study.

Psychologists see in the unconscious mind a background to the conscious, a kind of matrix forming a connection between all the individual's conscious experiences. We can only become directly aware of any feature of this background at the moment when it ceases to be unconscious, so that as a background it remains an hypothesis incapable of being verified by immediate experience. Thus we are conscious (not unconscious) of the dreams we remember, but at the time of dreaming them we were unconscious, and from them we infer other dreams of which we have no recollection, and which remain unconscious. Yesterday I heard a name which I have forgotten. To-morrow I shall recall it to mind. The gulf between the consciousness of yesterday and that of to-morrow is bridged by supposing an activity of the mind akin to consciousness which we call "unconscious." Examples of this aspect of the unconscious occur where objects apparent to the senses pass unnoticed, because attention is strongly directed elsewhere. The artilleryman ceases to hear his gun, the factory hand his machinery; we are all of us habitually unconscious of the sensations accompanying blinking, and in moments of great excitement people have been known not to feel severe pain. These unnoticed or unfelt sensations and feelings are often found to have left traces in memory. Similarly, we may reproduce from the storehouse of memory recollections of things which we have only imperfectly perceived, as when one repeats a phrase correctly which one has not understood. In the famous case quoted by Coleridge, an untutored German servant girl in delirium repeated the Hebrew she had heard from the lips of her scholarly master.<sup>1</sup> The unconscious back-

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge, "Biog. Lit.," Edited by Shawcross, 1907, I, p. 78, also quoted James, "Principles of Psychology," 1901, I, p. 681.

## THE "UNCONSCIOUS" OF PHILOSOPHY 15

ground wherein are stored the traces of unnoticed impressions and forgotten but revivable memories furnishes the material which figures in the typical experiences described in the last chapter, the images seen, the words that come to the tongue or the pen.<sup>1</sup>

On the physical side, it is held by psychologists that some trace is left on the neural system of the brain by any experience which can later be recalled to memory. This trace is a material fact, theoretically visible under the microscope, like the wearing of a path.<sup>2</sup> Corresponding with it we assume some mental process which we call "unconscious."

The term unconscious has another meaning when used as a metaphysical term, *e.g.* in the phrase "the philosophy of the unconscious." There it embodies a theory forced upon thinkers who, seeking to understand the nature of knowledge and of things known about, recognised a fundamental distinction between mind and matter and declined to describe either in terms of the other. They found on the side of matter more or less complete series of causes and effects suggesting a mechanical explanation of the universe, while on the side of mind they found a preliminary void and subsequent gaps.<sup>3</sup> To fill these in they made use of the hypothesis of "the unconscious." The term in this use cannot be understood without reference to metaphysical theory, but it is only remotely connected with the meaning we have in mind throughout this book, *i.e.* the psychological meaning.

To return to the unconscious as it concerns us here, a simile may be ventured, though, like most similes, it does not take us far. Imagine a hanging curtain of intricate pattern woven in strands of different degrees

<sup>1</sup> For a good description of the unconscious from this point of view, see Henry Sturt, "The Principles of Understanding," 1914, Chap. V.

<sup>2</sup> See Stout's "Manual of Psychology," 1901, pp. 111-112, and McDougall, "Physiolog. Psychology," 1905, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> A void before the Earth was cool enough for life, and gaps before the birth and after the death of each individual mind.

of transparency. A lamp plays upon it from behind, which concentrates or diffuses its light and moves about. As we look at the curtain the pattern seems to change, different sets of lines and shadows are emphasised or fade from view, different features in the pattern are successively brought into prominence. The part in relative obscurity at any moment corresponds with the normal unconscious of any moment. Sometimes the pattern on it appears simple and striking, sometimes confused and intricate.

Imagine an obstacle placed close to the flame of the lamp so as partially to screen it from the curtain. A part of the curtain relatively dim is now the only part lit up at all. This corresponds with the abnormal unconscious which has as it were taken on a significance of its own disconnected from that of the main field of light to which it properly belongs.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRIMITIVE UNCONSCIOUS MIND AS THE SOURCE OF ANACHRONISM AND INCONSISTENCY

*"We ought not to act and speak like men asleep. . . . Those who are awake have one world in common; those who are asleep retire every one to a private world of his own."*—HERACLEITUS.

IN the last chapter we considered the unconscious mind in a class of cases in which its presence is well recognised: visual and auditory images, spontaneous and impulsive speech and action, automatic and compulsive acts. We saw striking elements of an unconscious background bursting into the conscious foreground, but at the same time remaining more or less detached from the main current of the individual's conscious life. Such displays of the unconscious are more or less isolated phenomena, of no particular interest to the average man, whose chief concern with his fellow men is in matters of conduct and character. The fact that a certain individual is neurotic, or has mediumistic powers or artistic gifts, like the fact that he is dark or fair, is compatible with his being a genius or a degenerate, a scoundrel or a valuable citizen. There have even been kleptomaniacs and dipsomaniacs who were useful servants of the State. All that we can infer as to the character of such an one is a certain want of harmony between his complete self and some of his unreasoning and impulsive tendencies to action. In certain directions or at certain times we may be sure he will go his own impulsive way,

not guided by reason, but controlled by motives which exist only in his unconscious.

The activities of the unconscious mind which are now about to engage our attention show the same defective harmony between the total personality and certain groups of action or lines of conduct, but not the same abrupt line of demarcation ; they belong to the primitive and undeveloped side of the mind, the part which lags behind the van of culture. They are like submerged mountains thrusting their peaks perpetually above the sea of unconsciousness into the light of the conscious—constant features in the seascape rather than occasional eruptions thither. In this aspect the unconscious mind is the source of superstition, of prejudice, of intuitive convictions, preconceived theories, unanalysed bias. It largely makes us the people we are, influencing our conscious thoughts and actions and the current opinions, customs and habits of the community to which we belong. There are certain obvious difficulties which present themselves to anyone who would discuss this side of the unconscious mind. It is, to begin with, difficult to treat the subject of prejudice without imputing, or at least seeming to impute, moral judgment—approval or disapproval—and this in turn creates an atmosphere of personal feeling which is obstructive to clear thinking. The author's own prejudices are the very ones he will not see, but other people will. The sentiment he arouses may be that of "Physician, heal thyself!" Some attempt will be made to meet the difficulty by drawing illustrations from remote times or fields not intimately connected with prejudice in the forms we ourselves cherish, so that it can, as it were, be taken in the rear. It is hoped to show the significance of this class of unconscious mental phenomena by the careful examination of a few instances rather than by their multiplication.

It has been noticed that those acts of the medium or the neurotic proceeding from the unconscious mind

do not fit in with his everyday life; in the same manner, but to a lesser degree, the prejudices and superstitions of a reasonable person do not fit in with his recognised scheme of conduct and character. In both cases the individual allows himself to be prompted by a part of the mind which is generally in abeyance.

Wherever we meet with glaring inconsistency between theory and practice the link between the contradictories lies in the unconscious mind. For examples we may refer to the contrast between religious ritual preserved from an earlier age and its later explanation, between our unconscious motives and our alleged and conscious reasons for doing the things we do. We may also illustrate from the contrast between law and custom where these differ, the unconscious element preponderating now on one side now on the other; and from that between relatively enlightened and unenlightened opinion on any controversial topic of the moment. Here again the weight of the unconscious motive may preponderate on one side or the other, carrying with it, on whichever side it be, a peculiar intensity of feeling such as belongs to an object which we cherish fondly and the existence of which we feel in some vague way to be threatened. To illustrate:

At the zenith of their civilisation the Athenians used to worship the Olympian gods, chief amongst whom was Zeus, father of gods and men, "a being of quiet splendour and human or more than human understanding."<sup>1</sup> The Diasia was a Greek religious festival at the middle of March. It was as important in the Athens of the fifth century as are, say, the Easter festivities in a modern Catholic city. It was the chief festival of Zeus. Miss Harrison and Professor Murray have made us familiar with the fact that underlying the Greek religion of classic times was a substratum of ritual belonging to the religion of a more primitive

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Murray, "Four Stages of Greek Religion," 1912, p. 94.

race and epoch.<sup>1</sup> They have shown that while the cultivated Athenian of Plato's day was worshipping Zeus in this festival, Zeus the all in all, in one of his aspects, that of the easy-to-be-entreated, the gentle, the gracious one, he was also undoubtedly placating the spirits of the dead, who used formerly to appear as horrible, bearded snakes, and he was sacrificing pigs to them so that their malice and ill-will should be averted and the crops and herds be allowed to increase and prosper. Now the implied anachronism was ignored by the Athenian worshipper. The unconscious motive which impelled him to overlook it confronts us in the very name "the feast of Zeus of *Placation*." Death to him, as to his primitive ancestors, was horrible and uncanny. He was capable of being afraid of dead bodies, who seem alive and yet not alive; afraid, too, of the spirits of dead people who disappear he knows not whither and do he knows not what? Even now there may be wicked and malignant ghosts working him injury in ways he cannot guess. Best be on the safe side and placate them—there is no harm done. Thus in his conscious mind the Athenian rationalises and elevates. He ignores the tell-tale snake, the Zeus of Placation that figures on the temple reliefs, or else he explains it away. He finds a respectable derivation for "*Diasia*," and with a little straining of his critical faculty he believes in his own explanation and worships happily. He represses into the unconscious what, if realised, would cause a difficult conflict of emotions, the fact that he is attempting by a holocaust of pigs to placate a malicious ghost, "he who rages eager, panting and thirsting for blood."

The Athenian's remote ancestor, the primitive Greek, sacrificed pigs to avert the malignance of the dead and knew what he was doing. The Athenian himself does the same thing in an obscure way and does not fully know what he is doing. But his unconscious knows because it is still primitive, still afraid of the dead.

<sup>1</sup> "Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion," 1903, Chap. I.

We may here glance at a difference of opinion as to the way in which this two-sidedness of the mind arises.

With Samuel Butler or Professor Jung, some people may be inclined to see in the above example an instance of "inherited racial memory."<sup>1</sup> They would surmise that the reason why the Athenian's critical faculty goes to sleep over certain features of the "Diasia" is to be found in an unconscious memory of the placatory ritual of his ancestors; he accepts the traces of a holocaust because somewhere in the recesses of the unconscious he has dim memories of centuries of holocausts. It is an attractive and romantic theory, but we see no good evidence so far adduced in its support, and it certainly is superfluous. All that we can be shown to have inherited is the capacity for instinctive action.<sup>2</sup> No man of science would tell me that the reason why I eat when I am hungry lies in an unconscious memory that primitive man ate when he was hungry, nor has any instance of regression yet been observed that requires a different kind of explanation from that given of ordinary appetite.<sup>3</sup> The class of unconscious phenomena we are now considering includes those "archaic mental traits" which seem to Jung to "re-echo a once manifest archaic mental product." We venture to think that they are far more numerous and active than he allows, observable not only in the actions of the insane, and the symptoms of the neurotic, but also in the modes of thought of even cultivated people. They permeate our intellectual activities. The desires and instincts of the civilised

<sup>1</sup> See Jung's "Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology," 2nd ed., pp. 374, 410, 435-436. He speaks of "primordial images lying dormant" in the unconscious.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. McDougall, "An Introduction to Social Psychology," 2nd ed., 1909, p. 29. We inherit an "innate psycho-physical disposition," "to act in a particular manner or experience an impulse to such action."

<sup>3</sup> We inherit a capacity to react to the stimulus of food, or the idea of food, by eating; we inherit a capacity to react to the stimulus of dead people, or the idea of dead people, by placating them.

man of to-day are those of the primitive ; the way in which he displays them is modified, not radically changed. The difference between the two men lies in the inherited body of knowledge acquired by education ; it is a difference of the cultivated milieu and social organisation into which a man is born.<sup>1</sup>

Another case of characteristic inconsistency is seen in any law which a people has outgrown. The conscious motives of an earlier generation which framed the law reappear as the unconscious motives of a later generation. They remain sufficiently powerful to prevent it from being rescinded though in practice it be obsolete. A striking example of this is seen in the status of a married woman in the early Roman Empire. By law every woman was the personal property, first of her father, and then, at marriage, of her husband, who could even put her to death at his pleasure. By custom, says Mr. Hobhouse, "the Roman matron of the Empire was more fully her own mistress than the married woman of any earlier civilisation, with the possible exception of a certain period of Egyptian history, and it must be added, than the wife of any later civilisation down to our own generation."<sup>2</sup> She did not formally marry, so that she remained legally independent of her husband, while practically her father ceased to exercise authority over her. Naked sex antagonism which had instigated this harsh law had sunk into the unconscious mind whence there had not yet emerged that slowly developing sense of justice destined to lessen the theoretical as well as the practical inequality between the sexes each time it rose to social consciousness.

Our next illustration of the force of unconscious motives leading to inconsistency is taken from the Middle Ages, where current opinion wavered between opposite poles on the subject of constraint of thought. "Constraint," says Mr. Hobhouse, "in the older conception

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, Chap. XV, pp. 201-202.

<sup>2</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Morals in Evolution," 1906, Vol. I., pp. 213-214.

was justified on the ground that if a man will not do what he ought he must be made to do it.”<sup>1</sup> There is a time in the history of the race when the right to practise constraint is unquestioned. The actual survival of the group—that is of the tribe, city, church, nation or what-not—depends upon its keeping close together, presenting a united and energetic front to the enemy. “We are not divided, all one body we!” Primitive law is much of it in defence, Miss Harrison says, of the collective as against the individual opinion and action, “because at the outset what draws society together is sympathy, similarity, uniformity. A society based on and held together by uniformity lives and thrives on convictions accepted as instinctive and not submitted to reason; held with an intensity of emotion far beyond any reasoned convictions. To oppose them is ‘not respectable.’ These views are non-reasonable, pre-reasonable.”<sup>2</sup> The binding force of authority on opinion is not questioned.

But as the survival of the group becomes less precarious and a man may sometimes do as he likes without danger to the community, there comes into consciousness another and conflicting idea. “It is only in so far as a man acts freely that his actions have ethical value.” Then, says Mr. Hobhouse, “from the moment that honesty (of thought) is recognised as a duty it becomes increasingly repugnant to penalise the beliefs to which it may lead.”<sup>3</sup> Freedom of thought is now felt as a right. The conflict between free-thought and authority was fought out in the Middle Ages, not only in the secular or religious world, but in the individual soul. The more unconscious factors there were in the struggle the greater were the inconsistencies to which it led. Such inconsistency was least with people who had a good “rapport” between their conscious and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> J. E. Harrison, “Alpha and Omega,” 1915, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>3</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 369.

unconscious minds. St. Francis of Assisi and Joan of Arc both fought the battle for the right of the individual conscience and fought it in the open. Both were on the side of freedom and both believed themselves also to be on the side of the authority of the Church. Their position was logically untenable, but because of their deep sincerity and transparent candour Francis was scarcely ever inconsistent with himself, Joan perhaps never. With each of them, conscious and unconscious spoke the same language. They knew that God had spoken to them direct and must be obeyed; they knew too that it was right to obey the Church. With Francis there was, however, a residuum of unconscious motive on the side of authority, opinion taken over uncritically from the society in which he lived and held with a conviction which was "pre-reasonable" (to use a word coined by Miss Harrison). These collective opinions are shown in such a passage as the following from *The Admonitions*:<sup>1</sup>

"One gives up all he possesses and loses his life when he gives himself entirely into the hands of his superior, to obey him . . . . And when the inferior sees things which would be better or more useful to his soul than those which the superior commands him, let him offer to God the sacrifice of his will."

This passage is characteristic of his time, but not of himself. One dominant note of his life was individual freedom, and this appears in his will:

"When the Lord gave me some brothers no one showed me what I ought to do, but the Most High himself revealed to me that I ought to live according to the model of the holy gospel. I caused a short and simple formula to be written, and the lord pope confirmed it for me." <sup>2</sup>

The marvellous thing about the Maid of Orleans is that "authority" seemed to have no ally whatever in her unconscious mind. One cannot even suppose that she had passed through the phase of bondage to con-

<sup>1</sup> Quoted Sabatier, "Life of St. Francis," 1904, pp. 259-260.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

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ventional morality and got beyond it; she must have been born free. Throughout her torturing imprisonment and her undefended trial when for months subtle questions were daily put to her till she was wearied out by learned and imposing Church dignitaries invested with all the awe belonging to their rank, she never once hesitated or faltered from the position in which she started—that she submitted to the Church provided they did not command anything impossible. It was impossible for her to declare that her voices and her visions were not from God “and that which God shall command . . . . I will not fail to do for any man alive.”<sup>1</sup> She seems to have been without the faintest suspicion of a doubt that she might be mistaken in her attitude. At the stake she recanted as she said “from fear of the fire” and bribed by the promise of Holy Communion for which she ardently longed. Four days later her persecutors coming to the prison find her dressed again in man’s clothes—a habit she had been made to denounce in public as “dissolute, misshapen and immodest and against the propriety of nature.” With touching naïvety she promises “to be good and do as the Church wills,” if they will let her be taken out of irons and go to Mass. Her voices, she adds, have told her “of the great pity it is this treason to which I have consented, to abjure and recant in order to save my life,” and she did not recant again.<sup>2</sup>

When people behave in a way that is felt to be unlike themselves it is always under the sway of the unconscious mind erupting into consciousness. With Francis and Joan the wonder is that their lives and characters were so consistent, so unbrokenly individual. Most upholders of the right of private judgment and of the binding force of authority at one and the same time have shown far more glaring contradictions.

<sup>1</sup> She heard voices, and had visions of SS. Michael, Gabriel, Catherine, and Margaret, whom she recognised by their voices. See T. D. Murray, “Life and Trial of Joan of Arc,” 1902, p. 39, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> See T. D. Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

Roger Bacon—born about 1200—may be taken as typical. He lived at a time when authority was unquestioned in every branch of human knowledge. It did not interest scholars to verify the truth of reported historical or physical facts, or to question the validity of accepted principles. They adopted principles handed down from “the ancients,” and they concerned themselves with facts “observed, imagined or reported” primarily for their value in illuminating general convictions or accepted principles.<sup>1</sup> Living at such a time, Friar Bacon could yet speak out boldly as the conscious champion of freedom of thought, with profound insight and directness of expression, as in the following passage :

“There are four principal stumbling blocks to comprehending truth, which hinder well-nigh everyone, the example of frail and unworthy authority, long established custom, the sense of the ignorant crowd, and the hiding of one’s own ignorance under the pretence of wisdom.”<sup>2</sup>

Bacon appears to have been a sincere and somewhat truculent man who made no secret of his unpopular opinions, but propounded them doggedly and tactlessly in season and out of season without ever plainly seeing where they led. He constantly and faithfully advocates the test of knowledge by reference to experience. It is his unconscious, collective, pre-reasonable mind which speaks when he says that there are two kinds of experience, one observation and the other “divine inspiration,” and finds in “religious rapture” a source of scientific knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

The following well-known anecdote from medieval times also illustrates our theme.

A Jew was called upon to take part in a public dis-

<sup>1</sup> H. O. Taylor, “The Medieval Mind,” 1911, Vol. I., p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Op. Maj., ed. Bridges, 1900, Vol. III., pp. 2, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. modern theosophists who call clairvoyance an empiric scientific method. Irving, S. Cooper (Theosoph. Publishing Soc., 1916). Bacon, Op. Maj., ed. Bridges, 1900, Vol. II., p. 169.

cussion for and against the doctrines of Christianity. No sooner did he open his mouth than a scandalised knight felled him to the earth. St. Louis of France, the flower of medieval chivalry, when called upon to pronounce an opinion on the deed commented as follows: 'A layman when he hears anyone speak ill of the Christian law, should defend that law with nothing but his sword, which he should plunge into the defamer's belly, to the hilt if possible.'<sup>1</sup>

Here the unconscious mind is operative both in the deed of the knight and St. Louis's defence of it. There is, no doubt, a mixture of motives conscious and unconscious; on the one hand, love of Christ; on the other, race-hatred and the primitive desire to impose group opinion, along with the assumption that Christ's religion needs the constant support of his followers to save it from destruction.

<sup>1</sup> See H. O. Taylor, "The Medieval Mind," 1911, Vol. I., p. 545; or G. G. Coulton, "From St. Francis to Dante," 1906, p. 48.

## CHAPTER III

### THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND IN RELATION TO THE CONSCIOUS. ITS EDUCATION

*“Conscious professed ideals are as straws in the wind; the unconscious or concealed ideals are the real forces that govern mankind.”*—GILBERT MURRAY.

IN the first chapter the reader has been introduced to the unconscious mind in some of its well-recognised phases, those to be seen in the abnormal and supra-normal activities of artists, mediums and neurotics. In the second, the view has been put before him that various mental tendencies and habits with which we are all familiar in normal people are no less characteristic of the unconscious. In both cases alike a certain degree of dissociation is noticed between the conscious and unconscious spheres of the mind. Each would seem to have its own system of ideas, emotions and actions within which it works, the first corresponding more with external facts, the second with internal feelings. In the first set of examples, the two systems are shown working alternately. In the second set, they appear together; while the conscious system occupies the field, traces of the unconscious are to be found here and there.

The severance between the two systems in both cases alike would seem to be the result of two distinct causes.

First, the mind is unevenly developed, and what is relatively primitive co-exists with what is advanced without completely harmonising with it.

Secondly, the developed mind finds certain of its tendencies painful, and these are kept unconscious.

The two causes are intimately connected, because, as a rule, it is the primitive trait that is also painful and so is repressed into the unconscious.

To use a metaphor from geology, the perfectly sane mind has primitive "inliers," rocks cropping up here and there which belong to an older underlying formation, but it has none that are not capable of culture.

A man who comes to understand his own prejudice and neurosis finds that they can be cured by an effort of will—of what Jung calls the will for life. Indulged in, one and the other tend towards insanity. The unconscious, even for poetic inspiration, is most useful when in close association with the conscious.

Having outlined our general view of the two departments or functions of the mind, we will now examine their relation to each other. How far is the unconscious merely that part of the lump not yet affected by the leaven of education; how far has it an innately different character from the conscious and to what extent is it educable? In so far as it is undeveloped mind, how does it compare with the mind of the primitive and of the child? We will first turn our attention to the relation between the conscious and unconscious in ordinary life, and to the effect upon the unconscious mind of ordinary education.

The conscious cannot exist independently of the unconscious. From one point of view, it forms part of a whole completed by the unconscious. Their relation may be surmised by looking at the corresponding physical relation between the higher and lower nerve-centres of the brain. A "pithed" frog continues to behave for a short time at least as though he were alive (that is, after the connection has been severed between his higher brain and his lower, or spinal, nerve-centre).<sup>1</sup> Perhaps for him life is only in the

<sup>1</sup> James, "Principles of Psychology," 1901, Vol. I., Chap. I., p. 14.

unconscious. But consciousness in man cannot survive the severance, although man too has reflex, automatic and purely instinctive movements mechanically performed without reference to his higher brain-centre. To the lower nerve-centre and to the unconscious *par excellence* belong impulse and instinct, to the higher brain-centre and to the conscious *par excellence* belong deliberate purpose and reason.<sup>1</sup>

We may here stand at another point of view and regard the conscious as the unconscious, plus the higher mental activities which permeate and co-ordinate it. Impulse can have a life of its own without any developed form of reason, but reason without impulse cannot exist, cannot make a start.<sup>2</sup> Although we may safely regard the mind of the amoeba as purely unconscious, it is doubtful whether either type of mental activity is to be found unmixed in man. Even when the unconscious acts alone in a dissociated state, as it is called, it is not actuated purely by impulse or instinct. All the higher rationalising faculties are there in an undeveloped form, and not only that, but though its reasoning be defective it is a reasoning or rational unconscious. Logic is implicit in the waking thought of the primitive and in the dream thought of the civilised man.

Bearing this in mind, and remembering that we cannot truly regard the unconscious and the conscious as two quite different things, we can yet recognise their different special characteristics. Those activities which are characteristically "conscious" are, first, those which have developed comparatively late in the history of the race, and, secondly, those which have developed late in the history of the individual.

John Jones will be more like primitive man in his

<sup>1</sup> For brain functions corresponding with conscious and unconscious mental states, see A. T. Schofield, "The Unconscious Mind," 1906, frontispiece, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Henry Jones, "Idealism as a Practical Creed," 1910, p. 20. Ends of action are "ideas weighted with impulse."

unconscious than in his conscious, and also more like what he was as a child. If we wish to observe his unconscious, we must refer to his dreams by night, his prejudices and unreasoned convictions by day. In these we shall find his kinship with the primitive and with his own infantility.

It helps us to recognise our own unconscious tendencies to look at those of primitive man. They have been clearly grasped and plainly stated now by more than one psychologist and anthropologist, since man has begun at last to turn the searchlight of his critical faculty on to the development of his own mind.

The mind of the primitive has been thus described.

He only comes to think at all at a relatively recent stage in his career. "Popular belief says: I think, therefore I act; modern scientific psychology," according to Miss Harrison, "says I act (or rather re-act to outside stimulus) and so I come to think. Man feels and acts long before he definitely thinks."<sup>1</sup> And when he does come to think his thought is of a rudimentary, undeveloped kind, containing only the germ of its later forms.

"Primitive thought," says Mr. Hobhouse,<sup>2</sup> "has not yet evolved the distinctions of substance and attribute, quality and relation, cause and effect, identity and difference. . . . They are for primitive thought interwoven in wild confusion." Similarly with the distinction between subject and object, mind and matter, resemblance and identity, part and whole; none of these are discriminated, while "the physical individuality of things is not observed," they have personality—mana—but only vague and shadowy outlines limiting their physical identity. "The fact that a thing was mine makes it appear as though there were something of me in it."<sup>3</sup>

A clearer idea of the character of the unconscious

<sup>1</sup> "Alpha and Omega," 1915, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Morals in Evolution," 1906, Vol. II., p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 20.

part of our own minds may be gained if we compare this surmise as to the mind of primitive man with Miss Helen Keller's account of her own mental state before her education began. At 19 months old she lost her sight and hearing and consequently lacked the faculty of speech; she was endowed with an extraordinarily high degree of mental power and met with an equally exceptional teacher. In her earlier years the world was closed to her. She describes her life then as one in which there was hardly a distinction between conscious and unconscious:

"I lived in a sort of perpetual dream. . . . The physical acts of going to bed and waking in the morning alone marked the transition from reality to Dreamland. As near as I can tell, asleep or awake I only felt with my body. I can recollect no process which I should now dignify with the term thought. . . . my mind was in a state of anarchy in which meaningless sensations rioted, and if thought existed, it was so vague and inconsequent, it cannot be made a part of discourse. Yet . . . . I dreamed . . . . Once I smelt bananas, and the odour in my nostrils was so vivid that in the morning before I dressed, I went . . . . to look for the bananas. There were no bananas, and no odour of bananas anywhere."

"With the awakening of self-consciousness," she writes, "the idea, that which gives identity and continuity to experience, came into my sleeping and waking existence at the same moment."<sup>1</sup>

The mental development of mankind must have resembled in its course that of Helen Keller. Some ninety thousand years were probably passed at the lowest stage of culture, then came the dawn of self-consciousness and the rapid process of civilisation which has now lasted some few thousand.<sup>2</sup> With both the appearance of self-consciousness marked the turning point of progress.

We gain some notion in Helen Keller's case of an answer to our question, To what extent is the unconscious educable? It is educated *pari passu* with the

<sup>1</sup> "The World I Live In," 1908, Chap. XIV., p. 198 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, p. 401; see below, p. 202.

conscious. She is now a cultivated woman with the sense of touch developed to a high degree. From analogy with this, she is able to understand to a certain extent the sight and hearing of others. Alike in her dreams and her waking thoughts, concepts are formed, from analogy, of things seen and heard, but her own reproduced percepts are all of touch or smell.

"The likeness between my waking state and the sleeping one is still marked. In both states I see, but not with my eyes. I hear, but not with my ears. . . . I am moved to pleasure by visions of ineffable beauty which I have never beheld in a physical world." Similarly, she is moved to terror by fantasies of supernatural fear—the tiger with hot eyes and wet nostrils and lips moving horribly; the haunting figure which passes before her face like an embodiment of evil, with an extreme heat like the blast of an engine; or the embodiment of Death that "brings a sensation of cool dampness, such as one feels on a chill November night when the window is open. The spirit stops just beyond my reach, sways back and forth like a creature in grief. My blood is chilled, and seems to freeze in my veins."<sup>1</sup>

Some of Miss Keller's fantasies show wealth of imagination and intellectual power. The creative faculty latent in the unconscious was incapable of producing them till her conscious faculties were trained. The increased discrimination and control of attention resulting from education had effects in both spheres of the mind.

The truth is that the unconscious is all of one stuff with the conscious. How is it then that we find Jung (like Blake) writing about it sometimes as though it were absolutely different and almost a divine guide to be followed, while others of its students, such as Dr. Lay,<sup>2</sup> look upon it also as absolutely different but

<sup>1</sup> "The World I Live In," 1908, pp. 200, 182 and 186.

<sup>2</sup> Jung, *Collected Papers*, 2nd ed., p. 442. Wilfred Lay, Ph.D., "Man's Unconscious Conflict," 1918.

primarily a source of evil to be overcome? The explanation lies in the fact that not only does it lag behind the conscious and contain the relatively undeveloped part of our minds, but it also contains the repressed: whatever in each man is repressed because of the difficulty of fitting it in consciously with the life that has to be led. Now some people do not repress their evil so much as their good tendencies, and to them the unconscious will seem like an imprisoned angel. Blake, who saw it thus, was full of generous impulse; his heart bubbling over with love to all men; and on all sides he found the natural ardour of his love and generosity curbed by convention.

But there are people with sensitive consciences and a latent capacity for doing the things they think most wicked, and to them the unconscious will appear to be a caged wild beast or a lurking devil. Here we may observe that the moral as well as the intellectual development of the unconscious results from education, for our unconscious as well as our conscious estimate of the natural impulses we repress vary with time and place and stage of development. As will be shown later when we come to treat of dreams, the very demon of one age may appear the angel of another, and *vice versa*.<sup>1</sup> Take the case of a typical rather cold-hearted woman brought up in a strict religious atmosphere. The opinion of her group leads her to violent condemnation of the lusts of the flesh, and her fleshly desires towards individuals inside the table of affinity may be the lurking devils of her unconscious, they figure in her dreams in forms which imply moral condemnation in the unconscious as well as in the conscious, as demons or brutal people; her tendency to harsh self-righteous judgment of others, on the contrary, may appear to her unconscious, as well as to her conscious, a mark of grace, and figure in her dreams as a spotless angel, or a garden of pure white lilies.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. IX., pp 115-117.

When life has enlarged her sympathies, and suffering brought her wisdom, the rôles may be more or less reversed.

Or take the case of the typical *roué*, brought up in a society where a man is thought none the worse for being a profligate so long as he observe a certain superficial generosity. The devil as revealed to his unconscious may be the prudish and censorious kill-joy, down on the honest revels of his companions just like any hypocritical psalm-singing ascetic. His dream-judgment may picture such a tendency as morally bad. Later on in life his individuality has developed and he dares admit to himself what he does and what he does not enjoy and desire; then the devil recognised by his unconscious and depicted in his dreams as an evil influence may be the tendency to easy-going licentiousness for the sake of a quiet life, while a fettered angel may summon him to the path of asceticism. As the individual character develops, the ideas of right and wrong develop and change, both in the unconscious and the conscious.

A perfect rapport with one's unconscious self if it were attainable would not show one the absolute good; it would only ensure that one became aware, at the moment, of one's own most advanced conceptions and aims of that moment, as well as of the habits, thoughts, desires and impulses which hindered their realisation.

The unconscious is in itself then neither better nor worse than the conscious, nor is it intrinsically different, except as implicit or undeveloped thought and feeling are different from explicit or developed; it shows the character we were born with rather than that we have made. It is the source of impulse and instinct rather than of purpose and reason, but it reasons, and in so doing falls into an even greater number of logical fallacies than does the conscious.

As we have already hinted, reasoning itself is in-

stinctive or impulsive in origin.<sup>1</sup> Why do we try to think truly and search out the laws of accurate thought, except that we have an impulse to do so, an innate desire to know all and to know truly, to make no false assumptions, deduce no false conclusions, to beg no questions, but to reason rightly. The imaginative artistic man whose reasoning is his weak point will show this one-sidedness of his nature in conscious and unconscious alike. So will the intellectual scientific man who lacks a feeling for poetry. All that we have in us of good and of bad exists in both spheres of the mind, in the one in forms which are earlier, in the other in forms which are later in developing. As we educate one we educate the other and they change *pari passu*. Character and circumstance, heredity and environment have their place in both. We educate the unconscious by means of Freudian analysis of dreams and fantasies, and in so doing we change and modify our conscious views of life. We educate our conscious by pursuing any branch of knowledge, and in so doing we overcome unconscious prejudices and change the character of our dreams.<sup>2</sup>

We have compared the workings of the unconscious mind with those of the primitive and the child, and it is advisable at this point to get clearer ideas on the subject. It is well recognised that in some respects the childhood of the race is like the childhood of the individual, and, as psycho-analysts have discovered, each of these is in turn like the unconscious mind of the adult. The resemblances are confusing and can easily be pushed too far. For that reason it will repay our trouble if we try to examine them more closely. In some respects the savage, the child and the uncon-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. McDougall, "An Introduction to Social Psychology," 2nd ed., 1909, pp. 42, 43, 44. Instincts and habits which are derived from instincts are the only motive power of thought and action.

<sup>2</sup> I am aware that this view of the unconscious is widely different from that developed in Prof. Jung's later writings. "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., Chap. XIV.

scious mind are alike, while the civilised man, the grown-up person and the conscious mind are also alike.

To take the first group. We no longer talk of the “savage,” because the name was due to a failure to understand which is beginning to be corrected. We nowadays call him the “primitive.” He is primitive because he is uneducated comparatively with ourselves. We too may be “primitive” to our descendants ten thousand years hence. His defect in education may be due to the time and place in which he lives. Shakespeare, had he lived in 9000 B.C., would have been a primitive, with some of the ways of thinking and acting of his own Caliban. Unlike Caliban, he would have also been a genius and a great and noble primitive man, fit object for the wonder and admiration of his own and successive ages. Helen Keller, the blind deaf-mute American woman, turns out to be an unusually clear and brilliant thinker,<sup>1</sup> but had her teacher never come into her life she would have continued to grope in the darkness she describes, her mentality akin to that of the higher animals. If our minds are different from those of our “rude forefathers,” it is not because of any innate individual superiority. Any individual evolutionary improvement that has been effected during the (biologically speaking) very short time of man’s existence, is as yet so small that it cannot be traced.<sup>2</sup> As we have seen, we are more civilised than our forefathers only because of two things, the accumulated knowledge of the race and its more highly developed social structure. The primitive remained relatively uneducated and undeveloped; the modern child de-

<sup>1</sup> See H. Keller, “The World I Live In,” 1908, and *supra*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See G. F. Scott Elliot, “Prehistoric Man and his Story,” 1915, and McDougall, “An Introduction to Social Psychology,” 2nd ed., 1909, p. 328. “Whereas animal species have advanced . . . by the improvement of the innate mental constitution of the species, man . . . has progressed in the main by means of the increase in volume and improvement in quality of the sum of knowledge, belief, and custom, which constitutes the tradition of any society.”

velops more nearly at the rate at which Helen Keller did when her teacher came. There is not the gulf between us and the primitive that we have been used to imagine. In so far as we are uneducated, we are all primitive. We may be wise without education, and so might the primitive, but natural wisdom is, and always has been, rare. We need not go to New Guinea for instances of crude superstitious beliefs. We can find them amongst ourselves and our neighbours. A woman who works in a London factory confided to me that though she never goes to church yet she believes in "an Almighty" because once she had a dream in which her mother appeared to her and forewarned her of an impending abscess in the breast. "After that," she said, "I should be wicked if I didn't believe in an Almighty, and I think people are wicked who say there isn't one."

Not only are crudely superstitious notions far more common than is generally admitted, but we are all of us influenced in our serious and deliberate thoughts and opinions to an extent of which we are not aware by just the same unconscious confusion of categories that has seemed to make the savages' world unrecognisable to us.

Up to a point, uneducated and consequently undeveloped minds are all alike, whether they be those of primitive man, of children or of abnormal people such as neurotics and mediums whose unconscious is more or less cut off from their conscious in certain directions, and so remains more or less undeveloped.<sup>1</sup> Nervous instability and a relatively large subliminal field of

<sup>1</sup> Further light will be thrown on the workings of the unconscious and the connection between the primitive and the repressed when a psycho-analytic study is made of the nervous illnesses which would seem to be prevalent amongst certain primitive peoples in all parts of the world (*cf.* M.A. Czaplicka, "Aboriginal Siberia," p. 308), and of nervous affections of horses and dogs, see Friedburger and Fröhner, "Vet., Pathology," trans. Hayes, see footnote, p. 211, Chap. XVI.

consciousness seems to be characteristic of them all.<sup>1</sup>

But we must not press the resemblance too far. The modern child is extremely unlike a primitive in some ways because his much more rapid mental training begins in the cradle—especially if his parents are believers in infant education. A child of two whose sense of perception has been trained may discriminate resemblances and differences in objects presented to the senses which to the adult primitive remain undiscerned through life. And not only that, but the child's mind, like his body, is sexually immature. The mature primitive man sees the world with the eyes of a lover of woman and an owner of wives. The child sees it with the eyes of a lover of himself and the owned-by his mother. This difference alone, out of many, permeates and colours their respective thoughts. Emotionally there is more resemblance between the child and the neurotic who still keeps childish traits in his sexuality.

In comparison with the conscious, the unconscious mind is both childish and primitive. It is the last stronghold of those modes of thought and feeling with which we start life before education has modified and developed us; and it is the hiding-place of those childish proclivities which are the result of partially arrested or uneven mental development. If we are childish at all, we are more childish in our dreams than in our waking thoughts, and if we are undeveloped at all in our ways of thinking, it is in our dreams that we shall find the primitive traits; while in our intuitive pre-rational unconsciously based convictions we shall rediscover the beliefs of primitive man.

The primitive and the child, in distinction to over-civilised and sophisticated man, each possesses some

<sup>1</sup> See F. M. Davenport, "Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals," 1905, Chap. II.

spiritual faculties of a high value, such as immediate and passionate appreciation of beauty, the power of spontaneous expression, the unfettered display of creative faculty. It is not man's rational education which crushes out these delightful activities, as we have been wont to suppose ; it is rather the incompleteness of his education, its failure to remove the primitive barriers between the conscious and unconscious parts of his mind, those barriers which protect him from his unfaced fears and unconquered faults ; in short, by his resistance to making conscious certain difficult or discreditable traits in his nature. He shuts out the things of which he is afraid, and in so doing he shuts out too those good things which seem to some to make the unconscious a store-house of delight. It is easy to exaggerate either side of its character, for each one of us has God in him as well as devil and mere animal.

It is easy too for people with morally enthusiastic dispositions to fail to draw a distinction between the childish and the childlike, the crude and the sublime. The one is characteristic of the uneducated unconscious of the neurotic, the other is a result of harmony of the whole personality in a naturally loving individual ; of the filling in the gulf between the conscious and unconscious and draining the latter's stagnant pools. The child-likeness of Christian philosophy is the acquired simplicity of mature wisdom in a mind which is by nature loving and whose growth is natural and unchecked by prejudice. Spontaneity characterises such a life ; the eyes of the child, in just those matters where a child sees truly, are at the service of the adult. It is distinctive of Christianity to have aimed at this type of character, and not to have been afraid of childishness as a step onward towards childlikeness. More of us would be like Francis of Assisi if we were all less afraid of being like Brother Juniper.

We do not mean to imply that the childlike is the

only type of excellence in character, nor that all men are naturally loving. No amount of education would ever have made the Jesus described by Mr. George Moore<sup>1</sup> like Jesus as St. Francis conceived Him, any more than it could have made St. Francis himself like St. Dominic, or Napoleon like Nelson. The thirst for knowledge, power and beauty are also ruling passions in men's hearts, different from though not antagonistic to love.

<sup>1</sup> George Moore, "The Brook Kerith."



II

SOME PSYCHO-ANALYTIC  
THEORIES



## II

# SOME PSYCHO-ANALYTIC THEORIES

## CHAPTER IV

### FREUD'S SEXUAL THEORY. JUNG'S LIBIDO THEORY. SEXUAL FIXATION

*"Ages past the soul existed . . . .  
And hence fleets again for ages  
While the true end sole and single  
It stops here for is, this love-way,  
With some other soul to mingle."*

(Christina loq.) R. BROWNING.

It has been the aim of the previous chapters to furnish the reader with a general notion of the scope and character of the unconscious mind in those of its aspects which we propose to study. In the section which follows we shall try to set out some psycho-analytic theories about the unconscious and its mode of working, and deal with certain *primâ facie* criticisms which experience tells us they are likely to arouse. One of these criticisms confronts us at the outset, where it is frequently offered as an objection to any serious consideration of the subject at all. Many readers are not unnaturally repelled when they find that a sexual motive is attributed by

Freud to all human activities. It may help us to understand *Freud's sexual theory* and our own position with regard to it if we imagine an analogous case. Let us suppose that instead of a sexual motive he had put his finger upon an "acquisitive" motive, which is, in fact, no less universal. Man is by nature acquisitive, desirous of acquiring and of possessing for himself every object which takes his fancy or promises to satisfy his desires. So far we all agree, but our imaginary Freud would go on to say that in consequence of this strong and innate instinct of man we were all thieves in will if not in deed. He would point to the scrupulosity of strictly honest people as a proof of their hidden desire to steal, and he would convict us of refraining from theft, not out of any natural goodness, but because we were afraid of public opinion, afraid of the concrete penalties of the human law or of the magical penalties of the divine. He might work out his theory by analysing the dreams of dishonest people, show exactly how it was that they came to steal, and classify the various forms of stealing prevalent, recognised and unrecognised. Now to the average middle class person, though he might not be disposed to agree, there would be nothing especially revolting in all this, because the accusation does not "touch him on the raw." He would think Freud was one-sided, but he would be prepared to treat his views with respect and to give him credit for taking a scientific and not a morbid interest in his special subject. The lady, however, who owes her washerwoman, the man who does not pay his debts, might dislike being convicted of a particularly mean form of stealing, and if deliberately paying less for a thing than one knew it was worth were included under the heading, still more people might feel indignant at the charge. Very poor people would be touched more nearly. When you are often hungry and cold because you are poor, it is difficult not to feel bitterly envious of less honest people who

“help themselves” in safe ways, and difficult not to be “touchy” on the point of one’s own honesty. How many people who are honest have thought the subject out and know just why they are honest and why they would urge a poor man to go to the workhouse rather than to steal?

But the case would be different if the struggle to be honest were an absorbing difficulty in the background of most people’s minds, if secret thieving in various forms were universal, and if many people’s lives were marred and to a greater or lesser extent rendered miserable because of the extreme or heroic measures they took to check their own thieving propensities. To treat the subject then in a cold, calm, detached and scientific manner would seem an outrage against humanity. We should all be up in arms against a theory which assumed us to be as bad as we really are, and worse, whatever might be the motives of its adherents. Nevertheless, we should be mistaken because in the long run any light from whatever quarter thrown upon the origin and nature of dishonesty helps men to become honest in will and deed.

Whatever helps us to understand our own and human nature in the end aids human progress, and this the Freudian theories do.

We may as well admit at once that their exponents are predominantly men of science, not humanists; they write as specialists in a highly technical branch of scientific discovery, not as men of refined and sensitive feeling seeking to ingratiate their conclusions with the multitude. They seem, indeed, rather to glory in their unpopularity, and perhaps are not altogether guiltless of the fallacious reasoning that because the truth is often disagreeable, what is disagreeable must be true. At any rate, they do not put things in a way which spares the readers’ sensibilities. It may be we are too squeamish. We are used nowadays, in England, at any rate, to having new and revolutionary views

brought to our notice with a courteous consideration for the feelings of ordinary people, and we resent it when such courtesy is lacking. But truth is truth, however it be presented, and it is our duty to examine everything and anything which *primâ facie* seems to contain a nucleus of truth, of deep importance to life. Any want of consideration on the part of psycho-analytic writers, however, has been outdone by the virulence of their opponents.

But the prejudice we naturally feel against Freudian views is not entirely due to the imperfect manner of their presentation. Galileo was the least aggressive of men ; Bishop Colenso was a scholar and a humanist ; Darwin's tone and temper were unexceptionable, yet each of these in his day roused storms of abuse not unlike those that thundered round Professor Freud. Their discoveries seem harmless enough to the modern mind. Why was it that they once aroused such violent feeling ? In each case it was because the new theory rendered obsolete some view of nature which expressed symbolically the grandeur and dignity of man. To accept the new theory would be to lessen man's greatness. Galileo pretended that the world, man's world, instead of being the object of admiring homage from the heavenly bodies, meekly trotted round the sun. Bishop Colenso denied that God created all the animals out of hand for the use and pleasure of man. He derogated from man's dignity by his assertion that the beasts of the field roamed the earth some millions of years before man came into existence.<sup>1</sup> People were furious with Darwin because he made them realise their kinship with the lower animals, and people nowadays are furious with Freud partly because he makes them realise the kinship of our own superior cultivated minds with people of coarse and primitive passions, degenerates, lunatics and savages.

Freud's emphasis of sex is to a certain extent merely

<sup>1</sup> Colenso, "The Pentateuch," 1888, p. 419, §1347 (ii).

a question of words. He finds, it is true, that sexual repression is at the bottom of all nervous symptoms and dreams, but then he implicitly regards all human activity as sexual in character. Jung's view would seem to be not very different. "In essence," he says, "our life's fate is identical with the fate of our sexuality."<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that the word "sexual" has a different meaning for them and for their readers. As a rule, we could substitute "emotional" without any loss in meaning, but it is perhaps better to keep to "sexual" until the important Freudian point is established, of the close connection between human emotions and sexual function. Freud gives the word the widest possible significance, and Jung identifies "sexuality with the so-called instinct of the preservation of the species, as opposed in some way to the instinct of self-preservation."<sup>2</sup> Now all primary human instincts and desires come under one or other of these two headings, the self-regarding, *i.e.*, those which concern a man's own personal existence and survival, and the other-regarding, those which concern the existence and survival of the race. Food-hunger and acquisitiveness are self-regarding, maternal instinct and rudimentary love are other-regarding. If we adopt Jung's view we see this second set of instincts as sexual. Biologically, they are consequences of the reciprocal relation of male to female in the sexual act. To call them sexual seems to us to involve a logical fallacy, but one which we need not linger to expose. It may be formulated thus: "A thing is identical with that from which it is derived."

Psycho-analytic writers sometimes seem to go a step further and see the self-regarding group as sexual too. This may indeed be done with a little further straining if we suppose that the individual exists for

<sup>1</sup> Jung, "Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology," 2nd ed., p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> "The Theory of Psycho-analysis," p. 20. C. J. Jung, New York, *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series*, 1915.

the sake of the race (a large assumption, but one which some social reformers as well as scientists seem to have no difficulty in making). Granted this assumption, and that of the fallacy glanced at, then there is a sense in which all rudimentary instinctive action can be called "sexual," since the biological aim of all is the preservation of the species. But it can be shown that the mental activities of the most civilised man are all developed in the course of the world's history from the rudimentary instincts of the most primitive forms of animal life, that is to say, they are developed forms of sexual instincts and hence, according to this view, are themselves sexual. This seems to be the position of Freud and Jung when they regard all human energy as sexual, or "libido," though Jung holds that it may become de-sexualised by turning from a sexual aim to a non-sexual surrogate.<sup>1</sup>

Jung's *Libido Theory*,<sup>2</sup> as I understand it, means this: that each one of us has a certain unalterable quantity of psychic energy or life-force, and certain more or less fixed channels along which it can flow, in the direction of our predispositions, our inherited instincts, desires and interests. When our energy is at a minimum this is because our libido is attached to unconscious fantasy. Libido can be either in the conscious or the unconscious. It can flow along paths which are mutually compatible or incompatible. Where incompatible, we have libido against libido, energy against itself, and resulting loss of efficiency. Such conflict when conscious tends to be resolved because we have libido for resolving it, but unconscious conflict may persist unresolved and is the basis of nervous disorders. One source of conflict lies in the very nature of human development; the primitive in ourselves is ever in antagonism to the civilised, the individual to the

<sup>1</sup> "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> "Collected Papers," p. 231, 2nd ed., p. 150. "Psychology of the Unconscious," p. 136.

collective, the mature to the childish, the enlightened to the ignorant.

Jung lays stress on the one-ness of the energy embodied in all human desires and strivings, whether of appetite, instinct or will, whether animal or divine. Libido, originally sexual, is according to him "de-sexualised,"<sup>1</sup> and is exhibited in ethical desire no less than in every other desire of man. The practical problem becomes one of how best to apply the individual libido, and no distinction is made between the libido for applying it well and the libido so to be applied. He sees all human energy as one, striving in one direction, the direction of man's progress from the beast to the god. Without his particular ethical theory, which will be noticed in a later chapter,<sup>2</sup> his libido theory does not seem to take one any further than the "conation" of modern psychology.<sup>3</sup>

To proceed to the *Theory of Sexual Fixation*. Freud finds the struggle in the soul of man for development both social and individual to be a struggle to develop sexually against the inhibitions of a moral Censor. All failures in development of mind and character, he would say, go along with and are, if not the result of, at least intimately connected with a fixation or partial arrest in the psychic sexual development. The normal human being passes through various stages of sexual development, in infancy, childhood and adolescence, in which the object of love is successively itself, its mother (whichever sex it be), the parent of the opposite sex, members of its own sex, and finally members of the opposite sex.<sup>4</sup>

For example, the baby girl first takes a delight in herself and her own body, then in her mother or nurse.

<sup>1</sup> "Psychology of the Unconscious," p. 151, New York, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XVI, p. 207:

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Stout's "Manual of Psychology," 1901, p. 69. The fixed quantity of libido seems to us to be based on a false analogy with physical energy.

<sup>4</sup> See Freud's "Int. of Dreams," 1913, pp. 218-221, and "Three Contributions to Sexual Theory," "The Transformation of Puberty," *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series*, No. 7, New York.

As a little girl she passes through a phase of passionate love of her father. Next she forms passionate attachments to girl friends, and finally all these lesser loves are left behind and she falls in love with a young man. This is the outline of the most usual type of normal sexual development, to which we shall refer later.

Some little girls are of a more or less male make of mind. With them the normal development will take a somewhat different course. In either case it may be partially arrested at any stage. Such blocks are especially frequent where the type of sexuality is unusual, and hence encounters social obstacles all along the line. Thus every psycho-analyst finds that a large proportion of the cases of neurosis he treats are due at least partly to the homosexual side of the patient's sexual nature and his consequent difficulty in fitting himself in to life, in getting at the same time the social approval he unconsciously craves and the emotional satisfaction needed by his peculiar temperament.<sup>1</sup>

To return to the pattern typical development. There may be what Freud calls a "sexual fixation" at any critical point. For instance, a man's mental sexual development may be arrested to a certain extent even in babyhood, so that he may grow up incapable of falling in love whole-heartedly with anyone but himself—a type of fixation to which psycho-analysts have given the name of "Narcissim." One such I knew, a working man, who when come to man's estate seemed to have none but the most superficial feelings towards anyone, otherwise than as they affected his own personal interests. His mother's death did not disturb his complacency. He walked out with no young lady, gave no presents. Perhaps nobody had ever loved him except his mother, and yet he went on expecting

<sup>1</sup> For the subject see Edward Carpenter, "The Intermediate Sex," and Westermarck, "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," 1908, Vol. II., Chap. XLIII.; also a paper by Dr. Constance Long, on "The Sexual Basis of Character," published by the Moral and Civic Education League.

appreciation, kindness and favours from all. He was not loved, neither was he detested, for he was incapable of a long-cherished malice. He could not easily believe that anyone wished him ill nor readily wish ill to anyone. He passed as normal and was well developed physically, but he gave one the impression of being somehow only half a man.

Benvenuto Cellini appears, from his "Memoires," to have had a large trace of this kind of fixation, which Mr. Havelock Ellis calls the auto-erotic. It is clear from first to last that he was much in love with himself and little if at all with anyone else.

The next type of fixation is much commoner. It dates from the time when the individual as a little child clings for protection to its mother. Such an one continues throughout life to feel inexpressible pain at being spiritually or mentally alone—bereft. He only lives when he is loved and protected by *someone* with a harbouring, uncritical love. Without this he is "lost," cannot find his bearings. He never learns to be independent in mind, but goes through life pathetically demanding an uncritical, soothing, maternal sort of love from a series of people who may be far from able to give it. If he cannot get it he will sometimes take refuge in the next best thing and play at getting it, himself being the loving, uncritical mother to some more childish individual. This dependent, clinging, childish strain in a mature person's love often enough gets mistaken for love of a far more valuable and highly developed kind. In most people it is blended with the more developed and normal sexual love belonging to a later period. It does not prevent a man from falling in love and marrying, but it affects his attitude to his wife or mistress. The wife experiences this who tells you her conviction that all men are childish. Where their childishness is not responded to by a strong maternal feeling in the people they love such men are not happy, but usually neurotic beings puzzled with themselves and disappointed with the world.

One often sees traces of such childishness in the loves of the poets and markedly in Rossetti. Beautiful as his love poems are, there is something undeveloped in them. They depict the yearning of the child for the fond partiality and cherishing warmth of the mother, and show the child's lack of reticence, the absence of a certain sort of shame which only appears with the mature passion. They show at the same time that depth of neurotic misery which belongs to such a fixation not understood by its victim :—

“ Beneath her sheltering hair  
In the warm silence near her breast  
Our kisses and our sobs shall sink to rest ;  
As in some still trance made aware  
That day and night have wrought to fulness there  
And Love has built our nest.”

The bereftness of a child torn from its mother's arms is poignant in this verse :—

“ Oh passing sweet and dear  
Then when the worshipped form and face  
Are felt at length in darkling close embrace ;  
*Round which so oft the sun shone clear*  
*With mocking light and pitiless atmosphere*  
In many an hour and place.”

This latent, unconscious tendency to idolise, to cling to and prostrate himself before the woman as Mother, had the effect of emphasising Rossetti's capacity for proud rebellion, as a partial corrective, and another familiar strain of his is this :—

“ Let no man awe thee, on any height  
Of earthly kingship's mouldering might.”

The next type of fixation is still easier to recognise.<sup>1</sup> The son remains emotionally absorbed in his mother, the daughter in her father, so often that it is not even unusual, though it is unusual for the situation to be

<sup>1</sup> For its origin, see Freud, “ Interpretation of Dreams,” 1913, p. 218. For girls' resistance to puberty see paper by Dr. Constance Long, on “ Psycho-analysis in Relation to the Child,” *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*, 1915.

wisely estimated. The unconscious selfishness of parents often encourages this arrest of development.

Lear is always mightily displeased that Cordelia should put him second and the man she wishes to marry first. It is common enough for a man to fall in love with a woman, because she reminds him in some way or other of his mother, and to be dissatisfied with her later when she fails to confirm the resemblance.<sup>1</sup> The parallel case is as frequent. A working-class man walked out with a girl for six years and in the end broke off his engagement because he could not make up his mind to leave his mother—with whom, however, he was not living at the time. Uneducated public opinion hardly knows whether to praise or to blame this kind of attachment between parent and child. It sometimes happens, of course, that a close tie between parent and child may have nothing morbid about it. A strong natural sympathy may unite the two in a satisfactory friendship. If arrested development and not a natural disposition is at the bottom of the connection, there will be unhappiness and nervous disorders.

To pass to the next type of fixation, passionate attachment to someone of the same sex is common enough, and where it is the result of fixation and not in accordance with the fully developed natural character of the individual no satisfying friendship can be formed. A youth's great friendship in the case of a fixation might prevent him from marrying and yet provide him with no emotional equivalent to marriage. What are the results of arrested emotional development, theoretically curable, and what, if any, of a thwarted but perfectly natural normal homosexuality forbidden its due scope by a mistaken public opinion?<sup>2</sup> Our present state of knowledge of the subject does not allow us to say.

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Papers on Analytical Psy.," 2nd ed., Chap. III., and Pfister, "The Psycho-analytic Method," 1916, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Westermarck, "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," 1908, Vol. II., p. 486, thinks its condemnation amongst certain races is due to its association with "the gravest of all sins, unbelief, idolatry or heresy."

True, it is made easy and honourable for men to contract friendships with men, women with women, of a unique and exclusive character, but, unlike Plato and Shakespeare, we do not recognise the sexual element in friendship. Most good people would look upon such an element as a sign of depravity, and so long as it is popularly held to be disgraceful it will be repressed into the unconscious wherever it appears in sensitive and upright minds, with results that are always injurious to health and often to sanity.

## CHAPTER V

### COMPLEXES. FATHER-COMPLEX AND MOTHER-COMPLEX, ETC. INFANTILE SEXUALITY

*"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, aye and his own life, he cannot be a disciple of mine."*—St. LUKE, xiv., 26, trans. Jas. Moffatt.

ONE of the most useful terms of psycho-analytic phraseology, but one which is hardest to define, is "complex." The thing is easy to recognise when we come across it in ourselves or others, but difficult to describe.<sup>1</sup> If a wife dread applying to her husband for necessary funds, it is because he or she has a "money complex." If I am in general critical of my fellow beings but can see no wrong in the deeds of a duke, or inversely can believe no good of him, it is because of my "snob complex." If I am a person of independent judgment but am afraid of what "my people" will think should I take to smoking, this is because I have a "family complex." If I am touchy on the subject of my personal appearance, I have a "vanity complex," and if I cannot keep cool during an argument on the subject of Home Rule, it is ten to one that I have a "tyrant-rebel complex." In all cases, emotions are stirred disproportionate to the occasion and reaching

<sup>1</sup> For an example, see a paper by Dr. Constance Long, on "Mental Conflicts in Children." *Report of 4th Annual Conference of Educational Associations.*

far beyond the object that aroused them. Whatever touches a complex seems to stimulate a network or system of memories, ideas and emotions, and to arouse a tendency to re-act unreasonably or perhaps "pre-reasonably." The complex has something in common with the instinct, something with the delusion and prejudice. It always implies partial dissociation, want of co-operation, between the conscious and unconscious. Certain unconscious factors are operative which, owing to resistance, have never been made conscious, and these give the complex its peculiar feeling-tone.

Most people, if not all, have some such systems of feelings and ideas connected from infancy with father and mother and containing a pre-reasonable element.

*The father-complex* and *the mother-complex*, as Jung treats of them, would seem each of them to be a blend of two distinct complexes. One which may be called the "authority-complex," the other the "parent-complex" proper.

The second of these is the result of the directly personal attraction of father and mother for child in infancy.

To take it first. It is obvious that in normal circumstances the mother, and a little later on the father, are unique objects of the child's affection. A naturally affectionate child will love passionately at a very early age and will focus his emotions on his parents, or whoever stands in their place. So far we are all agreed, but people who are unfamiliar with psycho-analytic terms may take objection to the designation of such childish love as *Infantile Sexuality*. When we have become familiar with the term and its implications this objection puzzles us. It is as though we were accused of degrading the beauty of a flower because we recognise the sexual functions of its parts.

Because we associate a sense of guilt with our own mature sexuality, we are inclined to overlook the existence of immature sexuality in the child. It would

be just as unreasonable to overlook the child's primitive combativeness because a grown man who hit his mother would be a blackguard.

If the theories of psycho-analysts are true, those in charge of children may do much to prevent nervous diseases, since it is held that all neurosis has its roots in infantile sexuality.

Adopting the Freudian view that the emotional life of the child is also its sexual life, we see that the character and development of the infantile love for father and mother will have an influence on the whole love-life of later years.

We may turn again to the development of a normal child and the various arrests outlined in the last chapter and see the bearing of sexual fixation upon the parent-complex—that web of ideas and emotions which is woven in the course of the child's life round the image of the parent or "parent imago."

With the auto-erotic, whose sexuality has suffered partial arrest in infancy, the mother and every woman who interests him will minister to his self-love.

Should there be arrest of development or "sexual fixation" at the second stage, the idealised mother or "mother-imago" will continue to represent for the man the one being who perfectly supplied his emotional needs, and this independently of her personal and individual character.

If sexual fixation take place at the third stage, the "mother-complex" will create an obstacle to a man's happiness in married life; he will tend in his fancy to put her before his wife. This type of fixation produces what psycho-analysts call the "*Œdipus-complex*,"<sup>1</sup> or not without some straining of language, the *Incest-complex*.<sup>2</sup> There must have been a time in the history

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 222, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Jung, "The Theory of Psycho-analysis," 1915, New York. Chap. VII. In our view, the use of the term "incest" in this connection is strained, because with primitives, as Frazer says, "By incest is to be understood any marriage which conflicts with their customs." "Psyche's

of man, or more probably in that of his ancestor, ape-man, when he first began to check instincts which prompt all animals to mate promiscuously, and no doubt the stage was marked by rudimentary moral struggle. Freud sees in this mating instinct an analogy to the passionate impulses which the little child directs towards its parent which though they incur no moral censure have sometimes to be restrained. Because of the "little curtain of flesh on the bed of our desire," we are forced as Blake has it, to put "a tender curb on the youthful burning boy."<sup>1</sup>

When psycho-analysts speak of the "incest-complex," however, it is not, as a rule, the childish physical impulses they have in view but the mental and spiritual bondage of the grown-up person whose relation to his parent is too close to be normal or healthy, and whose sexual life, even in the narrowest sense, is thereby adversely affected. "Father-complexes" and "mother-complexes" in their crude forms are to be seen around us any day. They hardly require illustration. We all know the man who does not marry because he has found no woman to equal his mother, and the woman who is so devoted to her father that she can never leave him. Psycho-analysts come across cases where these excessively close relations are the immediate source of ugly and crippling nervous disorders, and hear them mispraised as beautiful instances of filial love. If they seem to treat of the relation with a bias, it is not because they do not recognise the depth of love and honour peculiar to it and compatible with the complete development of the individual. Love of parents and love of brothers and sisters with very many normal people supply the passion and romance of a great part

Task," 1909, p. 33. The marriage between near relatives was sometimes enjoined by their customs. The primitive's *incest-complex* was always one of his gravest (see *op. cit.*, p. 47), but it did not imply a horror of what we nowadays call incest, *e.g.* to the early Egyptian who worshipped "the bull of his mother who begets all."

<sup>1</sup> "Book of Thel," last lines. Oxford Ed. of "Blake's Poet. Works," 1913, p. 245.

of life. People capable of love are sure to give a large measure of it to those they know most intimately. The result is happiness and zest. The result of an abnormal or too close relation is unhappiness and invalidism, or a failure in the control of energy.

In another aspect we noticed that father- and mother-complexes were particular cases of the "*authority-complex*." Parental control affords the child its first experience of a life-long conflict between impulse from within and law imposed from without. Obedience at first enforced becomes a habit over a large field of action, but even while the habit is forming the developing mind of youth begins to criticise the parental commands and finds that many of the edicts of authority do not bear the criticism of conscious reason. His own rational will comes into antagonism with his parent's, and the conflict becomes a conscious one. So far as he makes this discovery and realises his own attitude, he frees himself from the spiritual bondage of authority, whether by non-conformity or by well-grounded compromise.<sup>1</sup> But he seldom does so completely; just where authority is perhaps most "pre-reasonable" it is likely to have an ally in his own unconscious mind, and there he will still be a slave to his own formed habits, his unrealised intuitive thoughts, feelings and fears, bound up with parental authority. The most rebellious of daughters will have ways in which she has not torn herself free from her mother's modes of thinking.

The principal meaning of Jung's "father-complex" seems to lie in the tendency to accept the promptings of one's own unconscious mind as authoritative where these are identified with the authority of the parent over the child dating from early childhood. The complex is a system of ideas which constitutes a spiritual bondage to the views and opinions of the father, operative but unrecognised by the individual so bound,

<sup>1</sup> Jung, "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., Chap. III.

a kind of unconscious coil of memories and feelings in which he is entangled.

Any kind of coercive authority by which we are unconsciously influenced is usually identified with that exercised by the father or his substitute. It may well happen that the actual father has been the boy's greatest spur to emancipation, that his father's encouragement or example has helped him more than anything else in resolving the "father-complex," but even in that case the father, if he asserted his authority over the child at all, will have a mixed character in the unconscious fantasies, and in one of his rôles he will stand for the pre-reasonable authority of social law as exhibited in parental control.

The typical "*mother-complex*" has a different character. In this case, the moral prestige of authority attaches to the views and opinions of the mother. These do not have the imposed force of law, but the attracting influence of protective love. The mother symbolises that kind of authority which is felt as cherishing, not commanding, sheltering the individual and relieving him from arduous responsibility, from the necessity of growing up and standing on his own legs. The symbol draws its force from the earliest of all experiences in the individual's love life. It is at least as much connected with the first stage of fixation, the relation of the mother to the child in infancy, as with the second. This is the mother whose mighty influence is described in Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*, who, being an obstacle to the progress of the race and to the individual development, comes to be seen as "the Terrible Mother," the arch-enemy, from whom the individual hero must gain deliverance by the strength of his own right arm. Such deliverance is a death and a rebirth, a dissolution of the old childish bond of union and the adoption of a new manly and responsible attitude to life. The individual "puts away childish things." He finds the father and the mother

in himself. He becomes in turn one ready to guide himself, as his parents have hitherto guided him. Adult baptism, confirmation and tribal initiation ceremonies celebrate the momentous step thus taken in the spiritual development of the individual.<sup>1</sup>

Every recognised source of authority has two aspects, first as the powerful compelling father, whose edicts are accepted uncritically as law imposed with power, and, secondly, as the powerful, attracting mother, whose edicts are accepted uncritically as protection offered with love; they pass into each other, sometimes one, sometimes the other predominating, and their symbols vary with individual circumstances.<sup>2</sup> They are further intimately associated with the directly personal attraction of father and mother to child, which properly belongs to emotional fixation to the parent and characterises the parent complex as such.

The father- and mother-complexes as special instances of the authority-complex are common enough. There are men who pass through life never venturing to hold a view of their own contrary to their father's, and women of middle age who continue to obey the father or mother long since dead, and deserve to be called girls, as indeed they so often are.

The upward and onward strivings of man are thus seen to be in conflict with his tendency to timid and slothful stagnation of thought and feeling, which tendency is focussed in, or symbolised by, the father and mother in certain of their aspects.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Miss J. E. Harrison's "Ancient Art and Ritual," pp. 106-113, *Home University Library*, 1913; also Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious," and Newton Marshall's "Conversion."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the view of the Jewish Law. To the enthusiastic Jew it is a privilege offered with love, but the unsympathetic Gentile regards it as an irksome restraint imposed with force.

<sup>3</sup> See Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious," 1916, New York. This struggle, as Jung sees it, is above all others for its importance in the history of the individual. For him the conflict is the moral one, but here he seems to us to imply a particular view of the ethical question, which no one is bound to accept, that which identifies progress as such with moral progress.

This world-old struggle for freedom from parental control is one aspect of the general evolutionary struggle for development. The conflict is between the higher, more distinctively human, more far-sighted, co-ordinating desires and purposes on the one side, and the lower, less distinctively human, more near-sighted, impulsive or instinctive desires and unconscious purposes on the other. If each generation remained in leading-strings to the last, as each is inclined to do, there would be no progress. The effort involved in taking up an individual attitude is painful.

We evade it by various defences; take refuge in "authority" and make filial piety, or obedience to a god, who personifies father or mother or tribe, an excuse for shirking it. We turn a deaf ear to the demand, which is nevertheless the demand of our own nature, and leave it to smoulder in the unconscious. Of all shifts for evasion this of thrusting an unwelcome idea into the unconscious is the most dangerous, as we shall see later on.

The conflict that Jung describes between the forces of progress and stagnation is, as he depicts it, capable of resolution by the enlightened. The hero slays the dragon. He is born again and sees the world with new eyes. He sees truth now on both sides. The thing which appeared to him first good then evil appears now both good and evil.

The set of social opinions and customs which surrounded him from birth with the shelter and coercion of authority was good while he was immature, too weak to protect and guide himself; it became evil when it threatened his own independent and divergent growth; and now that he has taken his individual stand he sees it as partly good, partly evil, preserving some truths and hindering others.

*Note on Transference.*—Whatever type of sexual fixation is the ground-work of a neurosis, it is bound to

show itself in the course of psycho-analytic treatment through what is called the “ transference.”

According to Dr. Jung, this is the pivot of the psycho-analytic cure of neurosis.<sup>1</sup> The term seems to mean the focussing on the analyst of the patient’s emotional difficulties, whatever they habitually may be. This leads to their better understanding, and so makes it possible to remove them. In the psycho-analytic view, nervous disorders are the result of some defect in psycho-sexual development (taking the word sexual in its broad sense). One way in which this defect shows itself is in a tendency to some repeated emotional difficulty in love and friendship. For instance, one person may be prone to jealousy, another to idolise, another to be repeatedly disillusioned as one after another his swans prove geese. Whatever be the obstacle to a sane and happy life of the affections, it is sure to come out in the patient’s relation to the analyst, because wherever one person is continuously benefited by another, love and gratitude are the natural response, and this even though the help given be of a purely professional kind.

The patient’s warm feeling for the analyst both helps his cure and hinders it. It brings his emotional difficulty to a head, and so makes it easier to deal with, while trust and a desire to please diminish his resistance to the treatment. On the other hand, his resistance is increased by a wish for the analyst’s good opinion and a reluctance to expose what, rightly or wrongly, seems to him his worst side—that which he has hitherto repressed. The situation calls for delicate handling and a brave sincerity on the part of psycho-analysts, and the latter is not lacking in their published writings on the subject, though they may leave the layman with a doubt whether the end (of psycho-analytic cure) is best promoted by such an emphasis of the means (of ‘ transference ’).

<sup>1</sup> “ Collected Papers,” 2nd ed., pp. 270, 407.

## CHAPTER VI

### REPRESSION

*"Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires."*—WM. BLAKE.

THE psycho-analytic theory of repression is based upon one of Freud's most startling discoveries, and one which is hardest to grasp for the ordinary mind trained in the ways of academic thinking. Freud found that neurotic symptoms have a meaning known in the unconscious, but sometimes completely unknown in the conscious, mind of the patient.<sup>1</sup> The theory implies that there can be even in sane and not abnormal people complete dissociation on certain subjects between their conscious and unconscious minds, and those, perhaps, subjects to which they have given much anxious thought. Nothing is more astonishing to the student of psycho-analysis than the discovery of his personal dissociated unconscious and the way it works. No amount of reading on the subject will supply this experience, which can only be understood in others when one has passed through it oneself in the course of psycho-analytic treatment. Our dreams may convict us of thoughts and feelings on a specific subject which are very decidedly *not* ours. They may be feelings that once were ours but are now consciously rejected, or they may be future feelings we have not yet con-

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Selected Papers on Hysteria," etc. *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series*, No. 4, 1912, New York.

sciously arrived at. In one's unconscious mind, one may be aware of all sorts of things of which consciously one is completely ignorant. This kind of dissociation is the result of repression, the tendency to forget or never to realise facts that are painful or would make life in the present difficult, whether desires or cravings, emotions, memories or ideas. There may be facts which we have had the opportunity of observing but have never taken in, things which we do not know but which in our unconscious mind we know very well, and the knowledge of which is shown in our dreams. Thus an educated woman arrived at middle age thinking she knew the method of reproduction of the species but in reality misinformed. Her dreams were full of what were recognised by her later as unmistakable symbols of the act of reproduction as it actually takes place and not as she imagined it. Such ignorance in the conscious mind could only survive through her turning a blind eye to things seen and heard which were sufficient to enlighten her fellows. She did not know the true facts because she had an unconscious resistance to knowing them, the whole subject was one from which she shrank. There was, at the same time, an unconscious desire to face it shown in her dreams where by means of symbols it was pressed upon her attention. The unconscious had it on its mind, as it were, until the conscious was brought into co-operation, when it ceased to be a problem of the moment and dropped out of her dreams.

I have said that this extent of dissociation may exist in normal people, but in so far as conscious and unconscious are cut off from each other by repression, they are neither normal nor healthy, for the *mens sana in corpore sano* delegates to the unconscious only those matters which are more usefully confined to its province. They are performed as "secondary automatic actions," and the conscious is to that extent relieved of work. Once having learned to bicycle,

we all leave it to the unconscious to steer ; once having thought the matter out and decided that the underlying principles of religion or of criminal law or of poor relief are just, we apply them automatically. The cemetery chaplain could not survive who consciously realised the meaning and implications of the burial service each time he read it,<sup>1</sup> nor the magistrate who thought out in each case the general intentions of the law and the justice of its particular application, nor the C.O.S. Secretary who should try to renew his grasp of the principles of relief and visualise their appropriateness to each person who asked for help. The unconscious enables us to do these things mechanically by taking over the charge of the general principles on which we act. If we cannot readily recall such principles at will for a critical overhauling then we are in danger of becoming "dissociated," of doing the thing and not knowing why we do it.

Neurotic symptoms imply such a partial splitting of the unconscious from the conscious. For example, a man may have a terror of water, a terror which he connects with a particular experience of his childhood. He will tell you that the cause of his "phobia" is that he once fell into a pond and was nearly drowned. Should this incident be erased from his memory and revived in the course of psycho-analytic treatment, its recall to memory may bring about a cessation of the symptom. The painful and terrifying experience is indeed one cause of the symptom, but another and still deeper cause lies in the unconscious only, where a symbolic meaning is attached to the original incident and to ponds in general. Freud found that every neurotic symptom had a symbolic meaning only to be elicited by an examination of the unconscious, an examination which the psycho-analyst makes it his business to conduct. He proved this beyond the shadow of a doubt, and it is being proved daily by

<sup>1</sup> See "Life of John Smith of Harrow."

numerous psycho-analysts and their patients. The literature abounds in cases, of which one typical one may be taken for illustration, though it is seldom that a cure is so sudden and dramatic. Dr. Brill describes the case of a young man of twenty-three whom he cured of a "compulsion neurosis." For years the youth had on his nerves the idea of "killing time," and was always inquiring whether people did things because they wanted to, or only "to kill time." He was unable to get rid of the idea. He had a stepmother whom he liked well enough, and he was extremely fond of his father. The patient's dreams linked up "killing time" with Father Time, a patriarchal old man holding a scythe, and Father Time with his own father (though any resemblance was difficult to trace), and the scythe with the notion of killing. It was found from an examination of his dreams that the obsessional idea of "killing time" expressed an unconscious desire to kill his father.

When this was brought home to the young fellow he was for a moment speechless, he then cried and laughed and exclaimed, "Now you've got it, I can feel it; you have taken a ton off my head," and he was cured of this symptom of his neurosis.<sup>1</sup> An unconscious wish to kill one's father must be taken for what it is worth. In this case it was worth as much as a passing conscious thought of "How *could* you marry again. I *hate* you for it!" If this youth had been well balanced, the thought would have been consciously expressed and dealt with. But he was neurotic, that is, hypersensitive. He would think such a feeling "wicked." He represses it into the unconscious. There it continues to exist and forms the nucleus of a system of thoughts and feelings like itself, a network of ideas all hostile to the father and all incompatible with the boy's love for him and his notion of what a dutiful son should be.

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, Dec., 1913. Cf. the case quoted by Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 221.

The conflict between his anti-father and pro-father feelings or systems of feeling goes on in the unconscious. It is not consciously realised and so is never allowed expression, but it finds an expression in a neurotic symptom, a thing he cannot help doing. Until the unconscious meaning of this symptom is made clear to him by the analyst, he has no notion whatever of its significance.

It is difficult for the layman to believe this; just as it is difficult for the probationer in a lunatic asylum to believe that the patients do not mean literally what they are saying and doing. They seem to be acting rationally with the purpose of annoying. Psycho-analytic cures of nervous illness are a strong piece of evidence in favour of the correctness of the theory. It links up proverbial knowledge of human nature with the phenomena of "dissociated personality" studied in recent years by Janet, Binet, Prince and others, and by the Society for Psychical Research.

Commonsense says that it is better to have it out than to bury your anger, "to let off steam" than to "eat your heart out," to "cry your eyes out" than to "fret inwardly." Blake shows symbolically the history of a repressed feeling of hatred in one of his "Songs of Experience." He calls it "Christian forbearance." Forbearance in itself implies repression—we only forbear from a thing which we have a desire to do. Forbearance is often mistaken for forgiveness. Where we forgive, we realise and express our feelings of hatred and revenge, bring them into conscious conflict with our feelings of love and tolerance or whatever impulses lend weight to the other side of the scale, and we arrive at equilibrium. We leave no residue of feeling unexpressed. Where we are under the false impression, that we have completely forgiven an offence when we have not, there is a residuum of hatred unexpressed in the conscious, repressed into the unconscious, where it is liable to

gather force and at last burst through into the conscious with deadly effect.

“I was angry with my friend :  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe :  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.”

Repressed anger is not recognised as anger. I do not realise I hate the man who injured me, I only know that I am afraid of him, he fills me with fears. I imagine too that I have good feeling towards him, I am ready to smile on him and speak him fair. I wish him no harm.

“And I watered it in fears  
(that is my repressed anger)

Night and morning with my tears,  
And I sunned it with smiles  
And with soft deceitful wiles.”

Repressed anger grows and grows, and finally ends in conduct instigated by unconscious hatred and harmful to the man I hate. I bring about his death. Even then I do not recognise my hatred. He deserves what he gets, but it is not *I* that have done him the injury, he brought it on himself.

“And it grew both day and night  
Till it bore an apple bright  
And my foe beheld it shine  
And he knew that it was mine  
And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole ;  
In the morning, glad, I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.”

The poisonous apple which lures my foe to his destruction is the fruit of my unconscious hatred. Consciously I do not hate him at all, much less see that I am trying to kill him.

This life-history of a buried anger is the work of a singularly sincere and direct mind with a remarkable working connection between its conscious and uncon-

scious spheres. Blake recognised his unconscious as distinct from his conscious and could call it into play more or less at will. Yet Blake himself in his own conduct furnishes a striking example of repression. He did not fully understand the nature of his own unconscious mind, or its relation to the conscious. Finding it the source of creative impulse, in his case a well-spring of poetic fancies, some of them of marvellous force and beauty, he was inclined to worship it for its own sake and to decry those other faculties which are distinctively conscious, the scientific and intellectualising tendencies, the desire to know things as they really are. Whatever thoughts or fancies came to him from the dissociated unconscious mind he regarded as inspired, whatever desires and longings he had for conscious intellectual effort dealing with conscious material he regarded with suspicion, and depreciated. The unconscious, which displays archaic forms of intellectual activity, spoke to him in the language of subjective symbols.<sup>1</sup> In his waking dreams—

“ . . . the lion’s ruddy eyes  
Shall flow with tears of gold.”

and the tiger is a

“ tyger burning bright  
In the forests of the night.”

An interest in nature for its own sake is a comparatively late product of the human mind ; to Blake’s unconscious mind, as to the conscious minds of the Italian painters before the time of Giotto, natural objects are only significant in so far as they express the thoughts and feelings, the strivings and desires of man.<sup>2</sup> The mind of primitive man, and the more primitive part of the cultivated mind does not observe closely, it registers impressions as facts ; it does not explicitly reason, it

<sup>1</sup> See Jung, “Psychology of the Unconscious,” 1916, New York, Chap. I. and see below, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> See Percy Gardner, “Grammar of Greek Art,” 1905, on “Symbols.”

records intuitive perceptions. Often the impressions registered and the intuitive judgments recorded will be found in fact to be true, to embody scientific as well as poetic or subjective truth, to bear the test of observation and logic ; but often they will be found to be false, to be based on hasty and inaccurate observation and on mistaken reasoning ; for the unconscious reasons, but reasons incorrectly.

Blake revelled in the exercise of his unconscious faculties. He was a giant in the realm of fantasy, and "rejoiced as a giant to run his course." He rejoiced also in the exercise of his conscious reasoning faculties, but he only cared to turn them on to purely subjective material, data supplied from the unconscious. He constructed elaborate symbolic systems for the allegorical interpretation of his own automatic writings. But a desire for scientific truth, to know things as they really are, though late in development, is also innate in human nature. In Blake this was repressed. Perhaps he repressed it at the instigation of sloth. Had it been allowed expression, he could no longer have spent his days in delightful dreams, sublime and terrible, gracious or lovely, as the mood might be, but always subjective. Anyhow the murder would out. The repressed desire showed itself in his terror and envy of the very thing he professed to despise.

Because Reubens, Correggio and Titian tried to paint things as they really appear, made pictures which were not only symbolic of spiritual truths but also imitative of nature, they are for Blake, "outrageous demons," "cruel demons." "Correggio and Titian worshipped a lascivious and therefore cruel Deity and Reubens a proud devil."<sup>1</sup> He rages against them. His raging is so vigorous as to approach the character of a neurotic symptom, and it is due to the conflict in the unconscious mind between the desire to create freely, spontaneously,

<sup>1</sup> Ellis and Yeats, "Works of Wm. Blake," 1893, Vol. I., p. 149. A. Symons, "Wm. Blake," 1907, p. 145.

impulsively, and the counter and repressed desire to take pains to know and to represent things as they really are, things of the material as well as things of the spiritual world.

As with Socrates, or St. Francis, or Joan of Arc, no amount of extraordinary and mysterious traffickings with the unconscious could affect Blake's incurable sanity. He did not understand his unconscious mind, and he over-indulged its propensity to look at the outside world subjectively, to treat the objects he saw around him merely as material for his poetic fantasy, but he recognised his visions and his "dictated" writings for what they fundamentally were, experiences of a sane mind, and of a kind universal to man. All men, he thought, had it in them to see visions as he saw them, marvellous and wonderful, as the mind of man.<sup>1</sup>

The character of the so-called unconscious hypocrite furnishes another example of this kind of partial dissociation between conscious and unconscious. Just as it is difficult to believe that the hysterical woman is really not fully responsible for her tiresome conduct, so it is difficult to believe that a man who is actuated sometimes by conscious, sometimes by contradictory and unconscious motives, is really not fully aware of his inconsistency. Yet it is worth inquiring whether the ordinary type of hypocrite is more responsible for his two-facedness than is the sleep-walker for his sleep-walking, the stammerer for his stammering. True, the reason that he cannot see his own hypocrisy is that the sight would be distasteful to him, would necessitate conscious conflict and effort which he desires to avoid—effort to harmonise his conflicting tendencies. But this is just the reason why one cannot see what it is makes him stammer or walk in his sleep.

Wilberforce, the emancipationist, is a good example of marked inconsistency of conduct where the dissociation of personality is not so complete as to be in any

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Symonds, "Wm. Blake," 1907, p. 264.

way abnormal. On one side, he was the champion of liberty and human brotherhood, devoted, fearless, and untiring, and in opposition to the bulk of the religious opinion of his day ; on the other side, he was its inveterate enemy.<sup>1</sup> He was working at one and the same time to free the negro slave and to enslave the dispossessed English labourer. His love of freedom and sense of the nobility of human nature in one direction were fully conscious. They led him to see the enslaved negro, even when kindly treated, as a child of God kept from his birthright by the tyranny of man.

The English labourer was no less a child of God with a natural birthright to freedom, both political and civil ; why was it that Wilberforce saw in him only a symbol of licentious rebellion against just authority ? Why was it that he tried to prevent him from bettering his condition, and that he advocated and supported cruel punishment for slight offences ? How came he to support the infamous penal code and the laws against combination ?

The reason is to be found in his unconscious motives, especially in his unconscious love of power. Wilberforce was a rich man who enjoyed exercising authority. His riches and his authority depended upon the continued and increased subjection of the working classes of his native land. Not only that, but the conflict against lawlessness and disorder in his own innermost soul was ever present and never completely realised, and his unconscious terror of his own capacities for anarchy fixed upon the unhappy British working man as a symbol, reinforcing all the other motives for harsh coercion.

Panic is ever the mother of cruelty. People do not yield to panic who have no unexplored territories full of mystery and danger in the hinterland of their own

<sup>1</sup> For account of Wilberforce, see "The Town Labourer," and "The Village Labourer," Mr. and Mrs. Hammond. "The Quakers and the United Brethren were the only religious bodies that regarded slave-holding and slave-dealing as ecclesiastical offences," Westermarck, "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," 1906, I., p. 205.

minds. The worst calamities, the most appalling catastrophes, the most threatening dangers are faced with a calm and even mind by the man who has reckoned and come to terms with the enemies in his own unconscious.<sup>1</sup>

At bottom, the hitch in perhaps all cases of repression and consequent dissociation is in a sense partly a moral one. From one point of view, it may be seen as due to a defect of heart rather than of head. Wisdom (which is innate moral goodness distinct from intellectual enlightenment involving learning) implies a harmony of parts, and such inner harmony resolves prejudice, creates sympathy or understanding and brings it about that ignorance no longer bears injustice for its fruit. A natural love and humility is a preventive and a solvent of both mental and spiritual disorders. If we were better men we should be neither neurotic nor prejudiced nor unconscious hypocrites. But being just so good as we are and no better, most of us are morally improved by intellectual enlightenment. If once we become clearly conscious of the hidden motive of our hypocrisy, the hidden meaning of our neurosis, we change. A man whose conscience grows more enlightened, though he may not become more sincere, will be prompted to higher moral conduct. Education helps those people to be good in deed who before were only good in will.<sup>2</sup>

Repression, according to Freud, is always due to sexuality, but unless we give "sexuality" the excessively wide meaning he assigns it we shall be unable to follow him here. The crude sexual appetite, on which the survival of the race still depends, is strong in man and difficult to reconcile with his conventional morality

<sup>1</sup> *Of* the attitude of Sir Thomas More, who must have been singularly free from repression. Roper's "Life of More."

<sup>2</sup> Westermarck thinks that the moral improvement in mankind has been in two directions (1) that of increased enlightenment, (2) that of enlarging the bounds of the group within which moral obligation is acknowledged. *Op. cit.*, II., p. 744.

and with his spiritual desire ; but so are other appetites and cravings. Where food-hunger can only be satisfied by selfish or dishonest acts, it tends to be repressed, and certainly the conflict between hunger and morality figures in the dreams of the very poor. If most neurotic symptoms come from repressed sexuality nowadays, it is because, of all our cravings, we provide for it the least intelligently in our lives. Our social customs treat it to a mixture of surfeit and starvation. Custom early demands of the educated Englishman that he shall repress his instinctive animal expressions of love. Such emotional repression was not demanded by custom in Shakespeare's time. Nowadays, a boy must not kiss or fondle or weep or be sentimental or talk about his love. Richard Willis, a contemporary of Shakespeare, describes how as a boy he came to love learning. "Master Downhale (his grammar school master) took such liking to me as he made me his bedfellow. This bedfellowship begat in him familiarity and gentleness towards me ; and in me towards him reverence and love ; which also made me love my book."<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare himself was not required by custom to disguise his passionate love for a man, but could express it openly in love-sonnets to his beloved. In most directions, Elizabethan men expressed their emotions far more freely than do we ; they kissed each other, they wept in public, they dressed in the colours of their fancy, they talked freely on sexual topics, they pursued romantic friendships. There was, however, one direction in which they were restrained where we are free ; public opinion of their day required them to repress the desire for truth in matters of religion. Between 1570 and 1608, 180 Romanists were put to death as such without protest.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps we should find that the "religious complex" led to most of the neurotic

<sup>1</sup> "Mount Tabor." Quoted J. D. Wilson, "Life in Shakespeare's England," 1911, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> "Shakespeare's England," 1916, Vol. I., pp. 50-51.

symptoms of their time. The "Vicar of Bray" had little love of truth to repress, and adapted himself easily to every metamorphosis of "the religious orthodox," but there must have been many who thrust their qualms into the unconscious and became neurotically deaf, blind or what not, to defend themselves against the stifled cries of intellectual honesty. A man might not then talk about his politics or his religion unless they bore the stamp of orthodoxy, but he might talk about his love, its idealistic as well as its purely animal elements, even when unorthodox in character.

The Elizabethans are coarser than we, but in matters of love they show a greater sanity of the emotions. They live in a world where lust, if rampant, at least is not divorced from love. In his "Antony and Cleopatra," Shakespeare depicts a middle-aged debauchee coming back, as Bernard Shaw says, to a "typical wanton." As they embrace this is what Antony says and feels :—

" . . . . The nobleness of life  
Is to do thus ; when such a mutual pair  
And such a twain can do't, in which I bind  
On pain of punishment, the world to weet  
We stand up peerless."

Bernard Shaw's criticism is a measure of our own greater sexual repression. No wonder our dreams and neurotic symptoms seem to show little else than sexuality, when one of our public men popularly regarded as most free from prejudice can write thus :

" After giving a faithful picture of the soldier broken down by debauchery, and the typical wanton in whose arms such men perish, Shakespeare finally strains all his huge command of rhetoric and stage pathos to give a theatrical sublimity to the wretched end of the business. . . . Such falsehood is not to be borne," etc.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ' Three Plays for Puritans,' 1912, p. xxviii.

III  
DREAMS



### III

## DR E A M S

### CHAPTER VII

#### FREUDIAN INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

*"O, what land is the Land of Dreams?  
What are its mountains and what are its streams?  
O father! I saw my mother there,  
Among the lilies by waters fair."*—WM. BLAKE.

IN the previous chapters we have been concerned with the unconscious mind and its characteristics, and we have noticed various modes of mental activity, normal and abnormal, which supply data for our study. We have seen the unconscious operative wherever a man is beyond, beside or unlike himself, and wherever he acts and thinks in a manner which is disconnected from or inconsistent with his rational personality. Of all the material furnished by the unconscious mind, dreams are by far the most important as well as of most general interest. By his great discovery as to the meaning of dreams, Freud has thrown open the door of dream-land and furnished with a guide all who care to enter. Before his book on dream interpretation the meaning of dreams was still practically unknown, though much had been written on the subject. He pieced together the ideas of different thinkers, and partly by invention, partly by discovery, he formulated his own theory of interpretation. This theory has been substantially

adopted by all psycho-analysts, their points of difference being trivial compared with their basis of agreement. No doubt Freud lays undue emphasis on sex, for reasons which we have noticed, but there is nothing in his method which obliges others to do so. A charge is often brought against him by the Zurich school that he believes the unconscious to be exclusively composed of contents repressed from the conscious, but such an opinion is not to be found anywhere explicitly stated in his book on dream interpretation.<sup>1</sup> He is always careful to leave the way open for further knowledge. He may be said by his theories to have laid a foundation to which all may add so long as they leave room for the next generation to continue building. It is too early to begin to roof the building in.

The proof that Freud's general principles of dream interpretation are correct lies, to each individual, in the fact that when applied to his own dreams they bring conviction. The cap is felt to fit. Their application stirs the dreaming activity. If a fundamentally true interpretation of a dream suggested by the analyst be at first rejected by the student as too improbable or even silly, it stimulates more dreams and more, all repeating the same theme in different forms till conviction is borne in upon him. No other theory of dreams has this effect. Two other familiar modes of explaining dreams are sound so far as they go. They may be illustrated by an example.

*A man has a nightmare that a horseman is riding on his chest.* According to one school of thought, this dream is explained by a late supper of pickled pork and cucumber; or by the fact that a dog has lain down on the sleeper's chest;<sup>2</sup> according to another, we have explained it

<sup>1</sup> For the opinions of a typical follower of Freud, see "Psycho-analysis," by Dr. Ernest Jones, 2nd ed., 1918, Chap. XXXVII, where the concept of the unconscious does not seem to differ from that of Jung, but is difficult to reconcile with the description given earlier on p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> A. Maury ("Le Sommeil et les Rêves," Paris, 1878, much quoted by Freud) investigated dreams in this aspect.

when we have traced an association between the rider in the dream and the "Erl-könig," a song to which the dreamer listened overnight, and have linked up the song with a picture of the same subject and that picture with other pictures of kindred subjects. The interest of this kind of explanation is like that in pursuit of which the commentator traces a poetical image to its literary sources.<sup>1</sup> For most people the first sort of meaning found—the physical or physiological cause—is too superficial to be interesting, the second too remote and intellectual, but the sort of meaning that Freud finds in dreams has a human and personal interest for everyone, since every sane person is interested in himself and the springs and development of his own character, and it is upon these that the Freudian meaning throws light.

To turn to the theory itself.

One of its fundamental axioms is that *dreams are symbolic*. The images and situations that compose them are dreamed, not for their own sake, but because they stand for and express something in the dreamer himself; something he has to tell himself about himself. *Dreams are always about oneself*.<sup>2</sup> They appear to be about other people, but if I dream of my mother or of Lloyd George it is because my mother or Lloyd George is an apt, or at any rate an adequate, symbol for something in myself I wish, as it were, to talk about. This explains our odd choice of people we do and do not dream about. We can only dream about a person who happens to symbolise something in ourselves which is of concern to us at the moment. Other objects besides people that appear in dreams symbolise something in the dreamer's personality. Thus someone dreams as follows: "*I dreamed I saw a large oak tree standing on a hill, and on the ground by its side was another large oak which had been felled.*"

<sup>1</sup> For a good example, see a paper by Miss A. Johnson in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. XXX., July, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, pp. 227, 299.

The tree left standing and the tree cut down both mean something in the dreamer's self, some powerful growing force which stands out prominently in the landscape of his soul at the moment, and some other force which was formerly as powerful but is now destroyed, in its old form at any rate.

*Dreams express what Freud calls repressed wishes.*<sup>1</sup>

The term is not a clear one, since, in common parlance, we only wish a thing to which we consent with the will. A dream wish may be one which would never gain the consent of the will; it may be a repressed desire so strongly resisted by conflicting desires that in the conscious it takes the form of a fear. Many people feel an impulse to throw themselves over precipices, and the fear is so strong that they avoid precipices. Such an impulse accompanied by its counteracting fear would be called by Freud the expression of a repressed wish. It has been proved by psycho-analysts to be the result of a repressed desire of some kind. The desire is expressed, not directly, but symbolically. The dreadful fascination of the cliff may symbolise an unconscious desire to take a plunge into some apparently dangerous and unknown condition of life, or the desire to face certain problems repressed into the depths of the unconscious. For instance, a man may repress an unconscious desire to enter the mission field, or to marry; or he might be unconsciously impelled to face the problem of his own unorthodoxy or of the dishonesty of his mode of livelihood.

The wish fulfilled in a dream may be an unrealised one of this kind, or it may be a consciously recognised desire which in daily life is under-expressed.<sup>2</sup> Our strongest feelings seldom are satisfied and the dream wish may echo one of these. It may be a passing and trivial one like the desire to satisfy an appetite, or it may be deep-seated and of great personal

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, pp. 199, 438, 443, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. M. Nicoll, "Dream Psychology," Chap. VI.

significance; for if we *are* struggling with inner difficulties (and who is not ?) if we *have* traits in ourselves which we do not see or refuse to admit, then these things will be certain to find expression in our dreams—a fact which makes it rash for anyone to tell his dream in public. Thus the dream above quoted might express a repressed and unconscious wish to get rid of some partner with whom we imagine ourselves to be on the best of terms, and it might be disagreeable and embarrassing to have this unrealised desire brought to notice.

The dream-wish is not always easy to detect, because very often while the dream facts express it the emotion conceals it by misdirecting attention. We may dream of ourselves as dreading or disapproving something which happens in the dream, but its taking place is the expression of an unconscious desire that it should take place. Thus the dream of a person's death or funeral expresses an unconscious desire for them to be out of the way<sup>1</sup> though the emotion may be that of grief. The dream-fact shows hatred, the dream-emotion shows love for the person thus wished dead, and love and hatred are opposites, not contradictories, the contradictory of each is complete indifference. Where either of these opposite feelings is exaggerated in the conscious mind the other is liable to crop up in the dream.<sup>2</sup>

The dream of trying to kill something which escapes, expresses a wish for it to escape; of trying to catch a train and failing, a wish that we shall not go on that journey or in that company, as the case may be.

The most significant feature of a dream may be some apparently incongruous or irrelevant feature which the dreamer is inclined to omit in the telling. A lover of animals dreams that she stands beneath a favourite tree

<sup>1</sup> See Freud, *op. cit.*, p. 216, etc.

<sup>2</sup> We are familiar with their sudden and complete interchange of parts in family feuds, where it is notoriously unwise for the outsider to take sides.

with a kind and wise friend and they look at a nest in which a mother bird cherishes her young. In the dream the friend takes the fledglings and wrings their necks—but to the dreamer that seems like a mistake. It is, in fact, the chief point of the dream expressing in this case, as the associations show, an unconscious desire to have done with callow childishness. In a dream a tiger kills a favourite cat and the dreamer is wrung with anguish. Yet on recalling the dream she remembers that it ended with the cat still alive and larger than before, but this seemed a mistake, as though her eyes had misreported.

Sometimes the dream-wish is a tendency in ourselves of which we are perfectly aware and to which we have given much thought. But in that case we have not yet got to the bottom of it. We may have accepted it intellectually, but not emotionally, or the other way about. If we live too much by will our dreams express our impulses; too much by impulse, our dreams express the unsatisfied desire for a unified control of our conduct. Especially if we are introspective and at the same time self-controlled sort of people, it is likely to be a great surprise to us to discover desires in the background of our minds that we cannot at first recognise as our own. Our dreams bring out the opposite traits of character to those of which we are aware; the qualities which are contrary and complementary to those we know best in ourselves. They often convict us of not knowing our own characters.

Thus the dream of the trees which we have taken above may be that of a man who fully realises that he ought to break off a friendship which cramps his development. He has made up his mind to do so, has perhaps done so, as far as outward action goes, but emotionally he is not reconciled to the situation, he can only lament it. The dream expresses an unconscious desire to stand alone, which can now be made conscious, and help him in the ordering of his life. Or it may be that acting

on principle he has decided that nothing shall ever separate him from his friend, and the dream utters the dissentient voice of unconscious impulse. It may shock him in that case to find that he could in any degree entertain a wish to get his friend out of the way, but it is important that he should make the discovery, since he can now be on his guard against this wish which would otherwise influence his conduct capriciously as an unconscious motive.

*To find the meaning of a dream image we must discover what ideas are associated with it in the dreamer's mind.*

Thus we cannot tell what it is in the dreamer that the two trees represent, till we have his associations with them. If he is analysing his own dream, he will ask himself, "What comes into my mind when I recall my dream of the trees?" He will try to see the dream again, and will watch for any ideas or images that occur. Sometimes the most out of the way memories or ideas crop up. He says, "I don't know at all why, but I immediately think of a man I saw at Hendon last Saturday." The man seen at Hendon will have something to do with the dream's meaning. But he thinks in quick succession of a dozen other things, "Hearts of Oak, our captains cried," and the Hearts of Oak and Foresters' Friendly Societies. King Charles II. hid in an oak tree after the battle of Worcester. Oak is a hard wood, but liable to be worm-eaten, not like mahogany. The reed that bends before the wind and the oak that breaks. The acorns that little children pick up and put in vases to grow into oak trees. It does not matter which of these associations is pursued. Though they are quite different and appear to be unconnected with each other, they are all in reality driving towards the same point from different directions. Supposing, as a matter of fact, the dream was the expression of an unconscious wish to get rid of a partner, any one of these associated ideas would eventually lead to this wish by a chain of further associations. The dream is

psychologically connected with them all, and with others besides not thought of. The meaning is not, as it seems to the uninitiated, an arbitrary one put into the dream by the interpreter and then found there; it is in the dreamer's unconscious mind to start with and guides it in the choice of symbols which form the dream; thence it can be discovered through his free associations with the dream images.

Freud calls such "free associations" the "*latent content*" of the dream, and in them he sees the dream's meaning.<sup>1</sup> That meaning he calls the "dream thoughts," but he does not intend to imply a distinction between thought and feeling. It is difficult enough to grasp such a distinction in the conscious mind, where every thought has an emotional tone, and every feeling expresses itself in the form of a thought; but in the unconscious the two things are still more closely merged. In dreams, not only are thought and feeling not distinct from one another, but other notions which we distinguish readily enough in conscious life are sometimes "interwoven in wild confusion" as we have seen they are in the mind of primitive man<sup>2</sup>; there is often no clear difference in the dream consciousness between idea and act, subject and object, resemblance and identity, substance and attribute, quality and relation, cause and effect.

To get at the dream's latent content, one must recall the dream, and along with it any ideas that happen to occur at the moment of inquiry in connection with the dream as a whole or with any part of it. The associations of imaginative and active-minded people are apt to be bewilderingly profuse. If we are to see the wood in spite of the trees we must select, and we had better select amongst others, those that are least attractive to the dreamer—those that seem to him tiresome or off the point. The pleasing associations are likely to be less relevant to the dream,

<sup>1</sup> Freud, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. III., p. 31.

but to lead along by-paths where they promise intellectual or emotional pleasure from their pursuit on their own merits. Irrelevant too are the associations imposed upon the dreamer by the analyst, and in this respect Jung's doctrine of "hermeneutical" interpretation of dream symbols is open to criticism. To the patient's associated ideas he adds "objective analogies provided by the analyst out of his general knowledge."<sup>1</sup> But the interpreter does not get at the latent content of the dream or fantasy by adding to it material of his own, which is necessarily influenced by his interests of the moment, or his philosophy of life, or his view of the dreamer's needs. There are dreams, it is true, which treat of universal themes and are intelligible in their broad meaning to a child, but to give a more intimate and particular interpretation we need to be soaked in the local colour, as it were, of the dreamer's associations, otherwise we are likely to impose our own mind upon the dreamer's and call it studying his. In this respect, if in no other, we are better equipped for interpreting our own than other people's dreams, for no material which we add can be irrelevant. On the other hand, unconscious resistance may obstruct the flow of associated ideas, and we are likely to impose our conscious theories upon our unconscious impulses.<sup>2</sup> With experienced analysts this danger is lessened, and it is much to be hoped that Jung will one day make his own dreams the theme for the exposition of analysis as Freud has already done.

The beginner's chief difficulty in analysing someone else's dream is to avoid suggestion. To illustrate the sort of mistake he is likely to make with the dream above given, let us suppose he has just been reading about

<sup>1</sup> See "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., pp. 468-469. For examples, see Jung, "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916, Chap. IV., p. 204, etc.; and "The Psycho-analytical Use of Subliminal Material," by Dr. Constance Long in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. XXX., January 1918.

<sup>2</sup> See Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, pp. 87-88.

myths of death and rebirth. He will then be inclined to see it immediately as a dream of "death and rebirth," and ask leading questions, such as, "What do you think will be done with the tree that has been felled?" "It has to die to be born again," he will think, and the dreamer may at once jump to the idea, "Of course if trees are not cut down we could have no battleships or church doors." Or he may happen to know that the dreamer is a person notoriously injured by too close an alliance with an overshadowing friend, and, assuming the dream's bearing on this situation in real life, he may give a turn to the associations, "What do you think will happen to the tree left standing?" All the time the dream might mean something quite different; for instance, its meaning might lie in a play upon words, not at all uncommon in dreams. Tree-fell might call to mind the name Tre-vel-yan, and a certain Mr. Trevelyan might be known to the dreamer as a typical representative of a quality in himself which he wished to get rid of, to "lay low" as the oak tree is laid low. Any dream will do as the text for a helpful and appropriate sermon from one who knows the background of the dreamer's mind; but if we wish to find what the dream actually means we must go to the free associations.<sup>1</sup>

Freud calls the effort of mind demanded in order to get at these one of "self-observation." It consists, he says, in suppressing the critical faculty and getting into a state of mind like that which immediately precedes sleep, when "undesired ideas" come into prominence.<sup>2</sup> Desired ideas are less directly relevant. The essence of Freud's theory seems to lie in this collection of the associated ideas without prejudice. Jung is scientifically, though not medically, taking a step backward when he acknowledges a "different

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. G. Jung, "Studies in Word Association," 1918, p. 379. Here the analyst uses the dream of an hysterical patient as a text whereby he conveys information.

<sup>2</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 85

conception of the dream from that put forward by Freud" and departs from the purely neutral rôle of the scientific analyst to adopt that of the humane and kindly doctor who desires above all things to help his patients, and is ready to pursue any line which is proved by experience to have "value for life."<sup>1</sup>

The doctor's first business is to restore his patient to health by one means or another, and the psycho-analyst *quâ* doctor may do well to mix methods, but *quâ* analyst of dreams he has only to reveal to the dreamer himself the contents of his own unconscious mind. Remembering this, we will proceed to the analysis of our pattern dream.

To repeat : someone dreams as follows :

*"I dreamed I saw a large oak tree standing on a hill, and on the ground by its side was another large oak which had been felled."*

Some such dialogue as follows might take place between dreamer and interpreter, though in real life it could neither be so meagre nor so condensed ; it stands to any actual conversation as does a diagram to a map.

INTERPRETER : When you recall your dream does anything come into your mind ?

DREAMER : I think of Rembrandt's etching of three trees. Only in the dream there were only two, and one was felled.

INTERPRETER : Yes. Anything further ?

DREAMER : I was sorry for the tree cut down, I think.

It seemed sad. The other one, left standing, was a splendid tree. That etching used to stand in my father's study.

INTERPRETER : Have you any further associations ?

DREAMER : I used to go into Father's study for Sunday lessons—and when I was sent to be caned—but that wasn't often—only once I think. I expect I deserved it. . . .

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology," 2nd ed., pp. 222, 251 and 469.

INTERPRETER: Does anything more come into your head?

DREAMER: It's in a commanding position. The tree it felled was growing rather too close, interfering with its growth.

INTERPRETER: The tree it felled? Did the remaining tree itself fell the other?

DREAMER: Did I say that? How stupid! Of course not! . . . My mother never meant so much to me as my father.

Enough has been said to give the analyser a clue to at least some of the important meanings of the dream. The trees stand for something in the dreamer's unconscious self. They are associated with the father of his childhood days through the picture of three trees suggesting his father, his mother and himself. The side of his father recalled by the dream is that of disciplinarian and judge meting out punishment, also of Sunday teacher. He identifies himself with the tree left standing, since he describes the dream with this tree playing the principle rôle. A slip of the tongue betrays an unconscious wish to get rid of the other tree which was felt to be overwhelming, and to hinder his independent development. The tree cut down is identified with his father. He explains that there was no need to get rid of his mother's influence since it was never excessive. The dream's *primâ facie* interpretation is, as Jung calls it, on the *objective plane*.<sup>1</sup> The dream images represent people or things in real life, either the things they appear to be or others which they symbolise. The relations between the dream images represent real relations between real people. In the present case, the objective meaning of the dream is roughly as follows: "In my childhood it used to be Father and Mother and I. Father's authority and influence over me were then great, and though he was just, they gave rise to some unconscious rebellion.

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., p. 421.

His influence has continued in a way that has hindered my self-development. I hate hurting his feelings, but now I must really take my own stand and not let his views and opinions interfere with mine." The next and deeper meaning of the dream is on the *subjective plane*.<sup>1</sup> The dream images symbolise tendencies and desires in the dreamer himself. They represent his conflicting emotions on some individual problem of the moment. Here the subjective meaning runs somewhat as follows: "I am not unduly influenced by the ways of looking at things I took over from my mother, but I am only beginning to gain independence of outlook from that of my father. I have thought and said and done various things for no other reason than because he expected me to. I find that I am cramped and it requires a great and drastic effort to free myself; it is like cutting down a part of myself in order that another part may grow freely. It is painful, but I must be free."

I have given a very ordinary type of dream and meaning. That is to say, if one brought such a dream for interpretation, no analyst would be at all surprised at the line taken by the associations. To the analyst, it would be an obvious and not particularly interesting dream.

Let us start again and imagine the same dream, but dreamed by another person with a different set of associations.

INTERPRETER: When you recall your dream, does anything come into your mind about it?

DREAMER: Well, I've been reading a good deal about tree worship lately and it looked as though this one was going to be worshipped, as the others are cut down.

INTERPRETER: Yes. And what do you think?

DREAMER: Oh, it's the sort of thing that belongs to a barbarous age. We couldn't do such things now.

INTERPRETER: What things?

DREAMER: Oh, you know—human sacrifices and all

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., p. 421.

that. I expect it was often a way of getting rid of an inconvenient person.

INTERPRETER : What was ?

DREAMER : Human sacrifice.

INTERPRETER : Who is the inconvenient person you wish to get rid of ?

Then might follow the disclosure of an unconscious wish to destroy a rival, symbolised also in the destruction of the rival tree ; or a wish on the part of the dreamer to sacrifice herself and her own personality to please a commanding husband. Either would be traced through a chain of connecting links to the layer of her mind in which she was still akin to the "primitive," worshipping trees, believing in magic, and ready to abandon herself to hatred of a rival or self-abasement before a lover.

The associations might lead to widely different interpretations. The dream might be found to convey a suicidal desire aroused by the intolerable position of living in close quarters with a person the dreamer hates. It might express the wish fulfilment of somebody who was hoping to get employment as a forester ; it might symbolise a clearing of the ground preparatory to tillage or to the building of a house, or it might convey the idea that in order to look closely into the structure of one's towering fantasies they must first be rudely brought to earth, where they can be examined.

The possible interpretations are numerous, but not so the actual interpretation in any particular case, and Freud has given us the clue to this by bidding us look for it in the associations.

Freud lays great stress on the distortion of the unconscious wish in the dream figure, on the many implications of this figure and on the intricacy of the process by which it comes into existence, but we need not be puzzled on this account ;<sup>1</sup> for practical purposes the

<sup>1</sup> Freud calls them dream-displacement, over-determination and condensation, see *op. cit.*, p. 286.

associations will solve these as well as other riddles of the dream. Our task is not to look at the dream image and try to be clever enough to guess what it can possibly mean, either in a straightforward or a disguised manner; rather it is the easier one of letting our minds get into an uncritical, somnolent state, while recalling the dream images, and watching to see what ideas then occur to us. This will save us from the error of an arbitrary interpretation of symbols, against which Freud warns us.<sup>1</sup> It may save us too from such sweeping assertions as Freud allows himself to make when he says that "dreams which are conspicuously innocent invariably embody coarse, erotic wishes."<sup>2</sup> We shall be ready to keep an open mind on the point. After all, there have been many people whose lives were marked by a longing for conspicuous, that is plainly visible, innocence, and such a longing might conceivably find a straightforward expression in a "wish fulfilment" dream, the desire for a light that may shine before men.<sup>3</sup>

It must be remembered that Freud's Viennese patients are all sufferers from nervous disorders, in a town where (as in London) widely divergent codes of sexual morality prevail in different circles. It may be that they are all preoccupied in their unconscious minds with sexual difficulties to which they refuse conscious expression, so that his interpretations of sexual symbols are not actually strained. In that case it is most important to realise them, and important too to carry their interpretation, with Jung, on to the subjective plane where we find the full implications of these sexual longings and of the conflicting desires which lead to their repression. These conflicting

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Marcus Aurelius: "The man who is honest and good ought to be exactly like a man who smells strong, so that the bystander as soon as he comes near him, must smell whether he choose or not," XI, 15, Long's trans.

tendencies Freud reckons with summarily as the *Dream Censor*,<sup>1</sup> but if we apply his method consistently, we shall find that we repress not from one motive but from many, and that our motives for repression are not solely inhibitory or critical forces like a Censor, but in other directions are positive, constructive, creative forces and some of them among the most important factors in human progress.<sup>2</sup>

Freud has overcome his terror of "immorality" and is not afraid to find a sexual meaning in dreams, but some of his followers seem to be in terror of finding "morality" there, and this fear is an obstacle to advanced thinking. Yet if man *is* moral, if he *has* desires for moral goodness, for conspicuous innocence, and a thirst for knowledge, and a longing for beauty, and for power; if he hates, and has always hated moral evil, intellectual ignorance, æsthetic ugliness and feeble incompetence, surely these desires and passions too will find expression in his dreams and we should have the courage to look for them. Is it not a sound intuition which has always told him that they are expressed there? How could man who is "infinite in faculty" keep the sphere of the unconscious mind exclusively for the appetites or even for the struggle between desire and conventional morality? Freudian analyses do no more than touch the outer layer of the many wrappings of the unconscious mind, but if Freud's method be pursued experience will make this clear.

<sup>1</sup> Freud's "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, pp. 121, 287, 452.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote, Chap. XVI., p. 211.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DREAMS OF PHARAOH AND OF ANSELM

*"In a dream in a vision of the night,  
When deep sleep falleth upon men,  
In slumbering upon the bed ;  
Then he openeth the ears of men,  
And sealeth their instruction,  
That he may withdraw man from his purpose,  
And hide pride from man."*—JOB. XXXIII, 15-17, R.V.

WE will now make a brief analysis of some typical dreams, historic and modern, with a view to showing the sort of way in which it is possible for anyone without expert knowledge to get some idea of a dream's significance, and choosing our examples with this aim in view rather than for their intrinsic interest. For our purpose, a hackneyed dream is in some ways specially useful, and we will start with one of the Pharaoh dreams given in the Bible.

*" . . . . Pharaoh dreamed : and behold he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well-favoured kine and fatfleshed ; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favoured and leanfleshed ; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill-favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine."*<sup>1</sup>

In retelling the dream, the following details are added : that the lean kine were " such as he never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness " ; and that when they

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, XLI., A V.

had eaten up the fat kine "it could not be known that they had eaten them, but they were still ill-favoured as at the beginning."

The same night's dreams, says Freud, are always found to be closely connected, to bear on the same theme, and so to aid the interpretation of each other.<sup>1</sup> A second dream here repeats the principal image in another form. "Behold seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, fat and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprang up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven fat and full ears."

First, we try to form a notion of the personality of the dreamer and the situation in which he is placed at the time of the dream, so as to get some of its local colour. Joseph's Pharaoh is not identified. He may have belonged to the 22nd dynasty, when the names in the story were common. If, as has been conjectured, he was one of the Hyksos or Shepherd kings, he belonged to a period when their rule was established and they had become Egyptianised.<sup>2</sup> They adopted the Egyptian gods and worshipped especially a local variant of Set.<sup>3</sup> The gods of Egypt were in character like those of Assyria. In all river-civilisations, as Mr. March Phillipps has shown, the occupations, the hopes, the fears, of the people are dominated by the river. Their gaze is fixed on earth rather than on heaven, and they clothe their gods in bestial forms, amongst which the bull and cow are supreme.<sup>4</sup>

Next we turn to the dream itself and see of what it consists.

There are five chapters, as it were, to the dream. The *dramatis personæ* are Pharaoh himself as spectator, the

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 350, note.

<sup>2</sup> Sayce, "The Egypt of the Hebrews and Herodotus," 1895, Chap. I.

<sup>3</sup> Budge, "Gods of the Egyptians" 1904, Vol. II., p. 250.

<sup>4</sup> March Phillipps, "The Works of Man," Chap. on "The Tyranny of the Nile."

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Nile, the seven fat kine, and the seven lean kine, all of which represent certain traits or characteristics of Pharaoh himself. Thus the lean kine stand for something in himself which is destructive of something else in himself.

We will proceed to guess at his associations in order to find out what it is that destroys what. To do this we take the parts of the dream and refer to modern books on Egyptology to find their likely general associations for Egyptians of Pharaoh's time.<sup>1</sup> Pharaoh's particular personal associations are unobtainable.

I. *First, Pharaoh is standing by the river.* Pharaoh is a god and he is standing by the chief of the gods, the Nile, the source of life, on whose periodical flooding depends the fertility of the earth and hence the very existence of the people. The river is

"The God of riches who adorneth the earth  
 . . . . who loveth the increase of the flocks."

"Napri the grain-god brings his offering.  
 All the gods adore thee."

"Doth he forget to give food?  
 Prosperity forsaketh the dwellings  
 And earth falleth into a wasting sickness."<sup>2</sup>

The Nile is Hapi (identified with Osiris),<sup>3</sup> the son of Nut the Cow of Heaven, and wedded to Isis the Cow or the woman with cow's horns. Isis is mother-earth, the fertile plain of the Delta, and in union with the river, or of her own spontaneous creative force, she gave birth among the reeds by the river to a little Horus or Sun-god.<sup>4</sup> Every Egyptian when he dies

<sup>1</sup> This is not the "hermeneutical" method referred to on p. 89, Chap. VII., but an attempt to imagine oneself in the dreamer's place and so to find his probable actual associations, an attempt to reconstruct his individual background as far as possible.

<sup>2</sup> "Hymn to the Nile," Maspero, "Dawn of Civilisation," 1894, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Wallis Budge, "The Gods of the Egyptians," 1904, Vol. II., p. 42..

<sup>4</sup> Maspero, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

identifies himself with Osiris who was man and god. He becomes an Osiris.<sup>1</sup>

The Nile is responsible for a good harvest, but Pharaoh too is responsible, being himself a god, and should the crops fail he will incur the blame of his people.<sup>2</sup> We know that they did sometimes fail for years together, so Pharaoh may well be anxious.<sup>3</sup>

II. *Next, seven fat cows come up out of the river and feed in a meadow.* It was a usual sight to see cattle driven across a ford and coming up out of the river to graze on its banks. The Nile-god, the source of life, gives birth as it were to another god, the seven-fold cow, Hathor. Hathor was *par excellence* the cow-goddess, "The great power of nature which was perpetually conceiving, and creating, and bringing forth, and rearing, and maintaining all things, both great and small."<sup>4</sup> She personified love and as such was benign and beneficent. But the passion of love can have a terrible aspect, and so had Hathor.

In one famous myth she goes at the bidding of the sun-god to inflict vengeance upon men who are beginning to despise him. Bloodthirsty and terrible she slays far and wide.<sup>5</sup> She is only stayed in her holocaust by the mollifying influence of intoxicating drink.

Seven cows are pictured in the Book of the Dead as a sevenfold Hathor.<sup>6</sup>

The Seven Hathors predict the future and tell how people will die.<sup>7</sup>

In the dream all is well with these cow-gods. They graze in good pasture and grow fat.

III. *Then appear seven other cows, half-starved and*

<sup>1</sup> See Budge, Vol. I., 150, *op. cit.*, and the "Book of the Dead."

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, "The Golden Bough," "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., 1911, Vol. I., p. 354.

<sup>3</sup> Sayce, *op. cit.*, Chap. I.

<sup>4</sup> Budge, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Chap. XIV., p. 431.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., p. 365.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. CXLVIII., "The Papyrus of Ani," 1913, Vol. II., p. 644.

<sup>7</sup> Budge, "Egyptian Magic," 1897, p. 223, and "The Lit. of the Ancient Egyptians," 1914, p. 202.

disreputable, but offspring also from the god, the source of life. They graze side by side with the good cows.

The lean cows suggest famine, which to the Egyptian was always the devastating work of the evil god Set. Just as well-favoured and ill-favoured kine come up from one Nile, and feed together, so Set sprang from the same parentage as Osiris and Isis. "The history of the world is but the story of their rivalries and warfare."<sup>1</sup> He is "cruel and treacherous, always ready to shrivel up the harvest with his burning breath,"<sup>2</sup> the breath of the east wind which has blasted the seven thin ears of corn.

It is only by degrees in the course of man's history that good gods and bad become differentiated. Then they exist side by side. Creative forces which are prosperous and benignant and blessed by Hathor, the goddess of Love, dwell in the heart of man along with creative forces which are tinged with evil, blighted by Set, discreditable, hungry, unappeasable. Both alike have supernatural power to control him.

IV. *The lean cows eat up the fat ones.* There cannot be peace for long between incompatibles. Set is in perpetual conflict with Isis-Hathor. The lean kine, whose leanness is the work of evil, devour the fat, and so by all the rules of primitive thought they imbibe their "mana" and should themselves become fat.<sup>3</sup> But what happens?

V. *They are as lean and hungry as before.* They have won the day but are none the better for it. The good, fat, prosperous, nourishing cattle and corn are gone; the all devouring, lean and hungry, famine-suggesting forces are left, barren, unhappy, insatiable.

To sum up : Pharaoh has in his inner mind and heart

<sup>1</sup> Maspero, "Dawn of Civilisation," 1894, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, "The Golden Bough," "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., 1911, Vol. I.

a source of life and riches like the Nile or Osiris, a creative force upon whose beneficence he and his depend for their well-being. (This dependence does not, however, absolve him from responsibility, since he himself is also a god.) This spring of energy is bound up with his very existence, it is united to the earth which nourishes him and from which he sprang, and it is the begetter of his highest aspirations, the sun-god Horus. From it proceeds in his unconscious mind his benevolent, protective, respectable and altogether creditable desires which make him dwell in safety and prosperity. But from it also proceed other desires, the embodiment of the passion of love, as it is when tinged with the influence of Set the worker of evil, the enemy of the beneficent gods, the bringer of famine. Pharaoh's kind and gentle tendencies change to cruel, insatiable passion, and even his highest aspirations give place to a thirst for bloody vengeance, as when the sun-god became the slayer rather than the preserver of man. Pharaoh's hungry, unappeasable passions get the upper hand and carry all before them; the work of Set (the lean kine) destroys that of Osiris (the fat kine); but no good comes of it, for he is still hungry and unappeased, not prosperous or happy or well-spoken-of.

Joseph would certainly have been clapped into prison again if he had given this psycho-analytic interpretation. Especially if he had given it with a Freudian bias; for Freud would perhaps see a special significance in Pharaoh's identification of himself with the female cow-god rather than with the male bull-god, "the Bull of his mother, who begets all." This feminine trait may give us a clue to the attraction Joseph apparently had for him. Pharaoh readily accepts the interpretation of the handsome young Jew and makes it a reason for heaping favours upon him, although its truth could not be tested for another seven years. Perhaps we may find in the "in-and-in" marriages of Egyptian kings

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Pharaoh had no choice in the matter, but must usually marry his own sister) a biological cause of sexual abnormality.<sup>1</sup>

However that may be, the dream is a dream worthy of a king, and the Pharaohs, in spite of the drawbacks of their breeding, remained men and women of overwhelming force, very unlike those cheerful, patient people over whom they ruled, who used to sing at their threshing :

“ Thresh, thresh, O oxen,  
Thresh out the corn !  
Chaff for yourselves  
And grain for your master.” <sup>2</sup>

The dream might be that of a man who was weary of well-doing, tired of being smug and prosperous and respectable, and who felt in himself the longing to satisfy evil passions, discreditable and dangerous desires. He will give them their heads. He feels their supernatural compelling force, feels that they have a divine origin, that they are gods. But he feels—and this may check him—that the way to satisfy them in the long run is not the way he is prompted to take, or has perhaps taken ; that the more he lets them have their heads, the more dissatisfied and impoverished is his general condition of soul.

Further than this we cannot go in our surmise, and because we are without particular associations it remains merely a surmise.

Another Pharaoh dream may be outlined.

It is inscribed on a stele set up by the dreamer about the year 1450 B.C.<sup>3</sup> Thothmes IV., before he was king,

<sup>1</sup> For Royal incest, see Frazer's "Adonis, Attis and Osiris," 3rd ed., 1914, Vol. I., p. 44. Queen Hatasu had two brothers, of whom she married one, her daughter the other. "Records of the Past," I., XII., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> See Miss Betham Edwards, "Pharaohs, Fellahs and Explorers."

<sup>3</sup> See "Records of the Past," II., II., pp. 53-56 and I., IV., p. 15, etc.

had been hunting lions and gazelles, "journeying in his chariot with horses swifter than the wind." At noon he rested, and seating himself under the shadow of the sphinx at Gizeh, emblem of the god Ra Harmachis, he dreamed a dream. *The god appeared to him, and having declared that he was the god Harmachis-Khepera-Ra-Temu, he spoke to him "as a father speaks to a son." He promised him the sovereignty of the lands of the South and of the North (that is, of all Egypt), and along with it prosperity, and the divine favour. Then he makes an appeal: "Behold my actual condition that thou mayest protect all my perfect limbs. The sand of the desert where I am laid has covered me. Save me, causing all that is in my heart to be executed. For I know that thou art my son, my avenger."*<sup>1</sup>

Now this is a dream we might think we could interpret at first sight, a dream of a universal character. Thothmes longs for power, to be ruler over the kingdom of his own soul in all its parts. To gain his object he must save from destruction a god within his breast which is in danger of being lost sight of through neglect, a god who has given him, tired out with hunting, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The dream reads like a thought of Marcus Aurelius: "See that thou keep the ruling faculty within thee pure and unharmed."<sup>2</sup>

But when we come to look for likely associations in the history of the time, to guess what the faculty was that Thothmes was neglecting, we find there is more in the dream than that.

Thothmes, if he ever became king, would rule over the lands of the South and of the North from Thebes, the capital of the North, where his father now reigned. The Sphinx was a symbol of a sun-god of the South honoured at Heliopolis and Memphis, and identified with the sun-god Aten.

<sup>1</sup> "Records of the Past," II., Vol. II., and Wallis Budge, "Egyptian Magic," 1899, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> See M. Antoninus, trans. Long, Vol. II., pp. 13 and 17.

Heru-Khuti or Harmachis was the sun in his daily course.

Khepera was the sun about to rise.

Temu was the sun setting, and Ra was the sun-god in another form also identified with Aten, for there were not two suns but one sun, and a monotheistic idea underlay all his forms as the various sun-gods.<sup>1</sup>

The Sphinx-god of the South was not popular in the northern city of Thebes. It seems he was felt to have foreign connections, and was not, indeed, popular anywhere until he was more closely identified with Aten in later years.<sup>2</sup> In Thebes the god whose worship predominated was Amen-Ra. The victorious princes of Thebes had not long ago driven out the Hyksos kings, and Thebes, its god, and its god's priesthood had gained great credit thereby.

"Thothmes," says Budge, "viewed with dismay the great and growing power of the priests of Amen-Ra," the Theban king of gods.<sup>3</sup> This was the beginning of a deep split between two rival schools of religious thought. Aten-worship, towards which in his dream Thothmes inclines, was "something like a glorified materialism" with monotheistic claims excluding other gods. It was joyful, sensual, materialistic. Amen-Ra-worship had monotheistic inclusive claims and some high ethical and spiritual tendencies.

The dream would seem to mean, amongst other things, a desire to bring out the joyful, sensuous, unorthodox side of Thothmes's nature, and perhaps to rebel against "authority" personified in the Theban priesthood.

Glancing at the sequel, we know from the inscription he added to the obelisk of St. John Lateran that when he came to the throne Thothmes had the Sphinx duly cleared, but at the same time he was second to none in his devotion to Amen-Ra, set up a great obelisk to

<sup>1</sup> W. Budge, "The Gods of the Egyptians," 1904, Vol. I., pp. 363 and 470.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., Chap. IV., p. 69.

him and made a new Royal Barge "to receive the beauty of his father Amen-Ra when he is conducted along the river."<sup>1</sup>

The following is a dream which shows the general character of the dreamer, for it contains such individual touches as give a vivid impression of personality. It would arrest one in a crowd of dreams. It is one Anselm had as a boy when living "within the shadow of the Graian Alps"<sup>2</sup> and is recorded by his friend and contemporary Eadmer.

*"One night it seemed to him in a dream that he had got to ascend to the summit of the mountain and go to the hall of the great King. But before he began to ascend, at the first slopes round the foot of the mountain, he saw women, the servants of the King, reaping grain, but they did it too carelessly and idly. Distressed at their idleness and rebuking it, he made up his mind that he would accuse them to their Lord. He went up across the summit and came to the King's hall. He found Him there alone with His seneschal, for it seemed to him, as it was autumn, He had sent all His servants to gather the harvest. The Lord called the boy as he entered, and he went and sat at His feet. The Lord asked with a gracious kindness whence he came and what he wanted. He answered His questions with the exact truth (lit. just as he knew the thing to be). Then, at the Lord's command bread of the whitest was brought him by the seneschal and he was there refreshed in His presence. In the morning he verily believed that he had been in Heaven and had been refreshed with the bread of the Lord."*

How eager the dreamer is, how arduous and striving! "The fields are ripe for the harvest" and the King has sent his whole household to gather it. Yet he himself sits in kingly dignity above the sweat and the labour,

<sup>1</sup> "Records of the Past," I., Vol. IV., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> H. O. Taylor, "The Mediæval Mind," 1911, Vol. I., p. 269; and Eadmer's "Life of Anselm," in "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland," 1884, edited by Martin Rule, p. 315.

kind and unalarming, and ready to listen even to a boy, and to refresh him with delicious food such as one only gets on high days and holidays. The youth's longing is to mount, through toil and effort, delightful in themselves, to reach the summit of his desire and be with God. And he does reach it, the dream is a wish fulfilment. But, alas! there is one element of discord, one source of trouble present and to come. At the very outset of his life-quest he encounters women of the type of those careless virgins who let their lamps go out. True, these women whose conduct so perturbs him, are servants of the King, not his enemies; and they are reaping the harvest too, but in their own slack and idle way, not Anselm's. He would not do a thing half-heartedly, least of all a task that was done for the Lord. Surely there is something very wrong in this! He will accuse them to their master and bring upon them the punishment they deserve. He is no tale-bearer, there is nothing mean about Anselm, he rebukes them then and there, they know what they are in for. But when he comes to the King he says nothing about them. They die out of the story, as it were. He is asked where he comes from and what he has come for, and modest and humble-minded, but courageous and unabashed even before the majesty of Kings, he answers the exact truth so far as he knows it.

Happy Anselm to have such a simple nature, its main tendencies so clear and strong, its weaknesses so lovable. Those careless women, who are to agitate him so at times from the unconscious, are they not also a source of strength?

"He drew the special regard," we read in Freeman, "of some whose characters were most unlike his own." Could he have done it but for those potential vices in the unconscious? "Earl Hugh of Chester, debauched, greedy, reckless and cruel, beyond the average of the time, is recorded as being a special friend of the holy

man,"<sup>1</sup> and if we can be sure of anything we can be certain (*pace* Freeman) that the reckless earl had lovable qualities and that Anselm's friendship helped to keep them alive.

The careless women had their outbreak into the conscious too, if we are to believe Freeman that "a childhood and manhood of eminent holiness are parted by a short time of youthful licence,"<sup>2</sup> in which he yielded to the temptations of the flesh. Probably Anselm, like many other imperfect human beings, could only learn the lesson of temperance by experience of excess. The capacity for indolence when realised may have helped to make him as tolerant as he was to the weakness of more self-indulgent people.

A later dream of Anselm's may also be glanced at.

At twenty-four he entered a monastery characteristically admitting that he was proud of his learning and doubted whether he should go to Bec, since there it would be overshadowed by that of the famous Lanfranc. However, he went, and soon established a fame of his own. While there he had this dream, which gives us an idea of the attraction of the cloister at the time for men of his type. He saw in his dream "*a torrent filled with obscene filth, and carrying in its flood the countless host of people of the world, while apart and aloof from its slime rose the sweet cloister, with its walls of silver, surrounded by silvery herbage, all delectable beyond conception.*"<sup>3</sup>

The associations are very likely with Bec, which took its name from the stream or beck that washed the abbey walls. The dream seems to convey a harsh judgment objectively of his fellow-men and subjectively of his own unconscious capacity for being like them and acting as they acted; but we must remember the cruel and rapacious character of the times in which

<sup>1</sup> Freeman, "Reign of Wm. Rufus," 1882, Vol. I., p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 370 and 371.

<sup>3</sup> H. O. Taylor, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., p. 272.

he lived, when pitiless crimes and devilish debauchery were common among rulers, tolerance of wickedness, sloth and sensuality among priests, vices which Anselm spent a large part of his life in combating.

In his conscious mind he loved all men, and, says Eadmer, "he behaved so that all men loved him as their dear father. He bore with even mind the ways and weakness of each."<sup>1</sup> His unconscious supplies the repressed and compensatory hatred.<sup>2</sup> They are all "become abominable," this countless host of people of the world, "there is not one that doeth good, no not one." He would have them all swept away by the destroying and purifying torrent, he would himself withdraw apart and above, and enjoy the delights of the inner sanctuary of a lofty and intellectual mind. The forces of mixed good and evil are destroyed, not sifted.

The dream expresses a wish to be no more troubled with his own cruel, ambitious, lustful and luxurious tendencies, to be purified as by purging, and to pursue his intellectual interests in an atmosphere of serene detachment.

The dream is not so characteristic of Anselm as is the earlier dream. But it is characteristic of the unconscious that this side of Anselm should be expressed in his dreams. Few men have lived who succeeded so well as he in combining hatred of sin with love of the sinner. Yet his dream shows harsh intolerance and even violent detestation of others. He is the better man for this capacity for evil. To be meek and gentle only because one lacks the capacity for being angry and violent is a sign, not of a saintly character, but of a feeble mind. Anselm was a saint with a mind of unusual intellectual and moral power.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted Church's "Life of St. Anselm," 1898, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> See Maurice Nicoll, "Psychology of Dreams," Chap. VI., for "compensation."

## CHAPTER IX

### DREAM OF ST. PERPETUA, MYTHS AND UNIVERSAL THEMES

*"I entered through the convent gate ;  
The abbot bade me welcome there,  
And in the court of silent dreams  
I lost the thread of worldly care."*—SUNG CHI-WEN.

A FURTHER illustration may be given of the way in which the amateur may set about investigating the meaning of a dream.

The following dream is one of St. Perpetua chronicled by herself.<sup>1</sup> She was a young matron of Carthage (at that time a Roman province) who came under the edict of the Emperor Severus against converts in A.D. 203. At the time of the dream she was in prison with one of her brothers, expecting daily the summons to be "thrown to the lions." Her one prayer was for endurance. Nothing is told of her husband. Her old father alone of his family remained heathen, and his grief was her sorest trial. In the dark, hot, crowded prison she was visited daily by deacons, and "when she got her infant to stay with her," she says, "it straightway became a palace to me."

She dreamed "*of a golden ladder which reached from earth to heaven ; but so narrow that only one could mount at once. To the two sides of which ladder were fastened swords and hooks and knives, to the intent that if any*

<sup>1</sup> "The Passion of St. Perpetua," edited by J. A. Robinson ; and "Early Church History," H. M. Gwatkin, 1909, Vol. II., p. 124, etc.

went up carelessly he was in danger of having his flesh torn. And at the foot of the ladder there was an enormous dragon who terrified those who would mount. But Perpetua said, 'In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ he shall not hurt me.' Then the dragon, as if afraid, lifted away his head, and Perpetua mounted to the top, and there she saw a garden, and in the midst thereof a tall man dressed like a shepherd, milking his sheep, and around were many thousand persons clad in white."<sup>1</sup> We must go to contemporary history for probable associations.

The dream reminds one of Pompilia, Browning's girl wife. It seems to be on the same stage of mental development, to show the same innate moral fervour. It expresses a wish fulfilment, to mount to heaven and find God. The man she joins, having climbed the ladder, we identify with the Christ of contemporary art, who in his turn was identified with Orpheus, the tamer of hearts.<sup>2</sup> He is a beardless youth, the embodiment of joy and holiness, and Perpetua chooses him in his less common aspect as the shepherd who not only cherishes and tends his animal flock but is in turn nourished by them. The Christ of Asceticism, the Christ on the Cross, was unknown till nearly two centuries later, when Christians were inclined rather to withdraw themselves from the world than to remain in it and "leaven the whole lump."<sup>3</sup> The many thousands clad in white come from John's Apocalypse, well known at the time and now generally supposed to have been inspired by the earlier persecutions under Nero or Domitian. Its spirit of bold defiance of worldly authority was not fashionable just then, for in Perpetua's lifetime the laws against Christianity had hardly been enforced.<sup>4</sup> Each persecution was to arouse

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Francis Bond's "Dedications and Patron Saints," 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Percy Gardner, "Grammar of Greek Art," 1905.

<sup>3</sup> Hulme, "Symbolism in Christian Art," 2nd ed., 1892, p. 44; and Gwatkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 239.

<sup>4</sup> Gwatkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 121.

this spirit afresh, and we read of Perpetua and her companions arraigning the Roman Governor as they pass him on their way to the beasts, "Thou art our judge : God is thine."<sup>1</sup>

The ladder which reaches from earth to heaven is a universal symbol of religious aspiration. What child can see a ladder without surmising that one might thereby reach the sky ? Every Egyptian when he died hoped to be taken up to heaven with the aid of the gods who held it, by "the ladder of Set, the ladder of Horus," and a model ladder was placed near the dead body in the tomb to remind the gods that their help was needed.<sup>2</sup> The symbol still appeals to us in Francis Thompson's poem as it appealed to Perpetua in her dream. He invokes his soul :

" And when so sad, thou can'st not sadder,  
Cry, and upon thy so sore loss  
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder  
Pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross."

The Heaven to which the Egyptian mounted was an immense plate of iron forming the sky of this world, where lived the gods and the blessed dead.<sup>3</sup> This, too, was Perpetua's heaven, though she would have peopled it differently ; and is it not still more or less the heaven of the simple and childish Christian ?<sup>4</sup>

On Greek vases the ladder seems to be a symbol of successful love, and it has the same significance as a modern Neapolitan charm.<sup>5</sup> The ardent soul longs for heaven and sees an immediate heaven in responsive love. Desire is all of one and the same nature. Perpetua mounts the ladder to the heavenly bridegroom, her soul's desire and her body's. But the way of love is set about with knives and swords and hooks

<sup>1</sup> "Early Church History," H. M. Gwatkin, 1909, Vol. II., p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> W. Budge, "Papyrus of Ani," 1913, Chap. LXXI., "Egyptian Magic," p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> W. Budge, "Egyptian Magic," 1899, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. "There's a home for little children above the bright blue sky."

<sup>5</sup> W. Budge, "Papyrus of Ani," 1913, Chap. LXXI.

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that tear the flesh. The wounds which often befall the loving heart in married life could have been no slight ones in her case, for, as we have seen, she makes no mention of her husband, only of her baby. The way, too, is the "strait and narrow way" whereon one must go alone with none to help. The crowd enthusiasm of the early Christian martyrs had not appeared in extreme form as it did later, but not even abandonment to "herd enthusiasm" could destroy the terrible loneliness of death.

At the very outset the way is dangerous. Satan, "that old serpent" or dragon,<sup>1</sup> lies at the foot of the ladder taking the courage out of the heart. How hard it must have been to go against her father whom she loved, against all the ideas of what was right and fitting held by most of the good people she knew! The extent to which she had dared to break away from conventional social morality is shown, as Gwatkin points out, in a more striking action even than her death. She offended all the current notions of propriety when, a few days later, she, a respectable married woman, faced the beasts hand in hand with a slave girl of the lowest type "her equal and companion in Christ."

She has not reached that stage of mental development when she can think out the rights and wrongs of the subject, see what is good in her father's point of view, what is one-sided in her own. She is guided by impulse, the moral enthusiasm of an ardent nature; she does not even strive with the dragon, she sets it aside, conquering its "mana" with a magic spell in keeping with the beliefs of her time. "If the name of Amen be uttered the crocodile hath no power."<sup>2</sup> And her God is a greater than Amen. She is still a child, with the brave and beautiful soul of a child, hardly seeing the complexities of life, the confusing "spirals where good

<sup>1</sup> See Rev. XII., 9, and "Christian Iconography," M. Didron, Vol. I., 1851.

<sup>2</sup> "Records of the Past," II., Vol. III., p. 1.

and evil are interwoven but never tangled."<sup>1</sup> Knowing only the divine law which says "upwards and onwards," she mounts to earthly love and heavenly.

In Perpetua's time it was easier to reconcile the two than in later centuries when celibacy had become the working ideal of the Church. Repressed nature then found unconscious utterance in unmistakably sexual fantasies, and starved emotions fled for solace to the Song of Songs. "Beautiful, orientally sensuous, too glowing perhaps for Western taste, is this utterance of unchecked passion,"<sup>2</sup> the most popular book of medieval monasteries and convents.

We have said that there are dreams expressing universal themes by means of universal symbols. The parable, the fable and the allegory are conscious attempts to produce fantasies of a universal appeal akin to the dream. The myth is a similar fantasy produced, like rumour, from the unconscious mind of man and handed down with little alteration in its main outlines because it symbolically expresses primary conflicts of the human soul that do not change. Thus the onward and upward strivings of man in conflict with alluring sloth are, as we have seen, embodied in the myth of the hero who plunges into danger and darkness, encounters and overcomes the monster or giant and liberates the captive maiden.<sup>3</sup>

This myth in its many forms stands for the liberation of the soul by individual and collective effort along any one of the various lines of human progress and at any one of its ascending stages. It represents the conflict between ignorance and enlightenment, between moral evil and good, hope and despair, selfishness and altruism, stagnation and effort, slavery and freedom, civilisation and barbarism. If it symbolises too the death of the sun at night and its rebirth in the morning,

<sup>1</sup> "G. F. Watts," Vol. III., by his wife, "Thoughts on Life," VIII.

<sup>2</sup> H. O. Taylor, "The Mediæval Mind," 1911, Vol. I., p. 333.

<sup>3</sup> See *supra.*, p. 64, Chap. V.

or the death of the old year and its resurrection in the spring, the drama of Nature has been thus recorded because its scenes were felt to have symbolical significance, to represent to man the inner struggles of the soul.

Perhaps new myths are in process of formation embodying the mental conflicts characteristic of a more advanced epoch. We should look for them in the themes of universal or typical dreams. One of these is perhaps later than the civilisation of the Ancient World, certainly later than that of primitive peoples. This is the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, the desire to follow natural animal impulse whether good or bad, and the desire to check animal impulse and yield to divine strivings. Primitive man knows no such conflict. Chastity has no meaning to him except as a means for ensuring a good harvest, or of safeguarding himself against the infectious weakness of women.<sup>1</sup> But with men of medieval and later times probably the bulk of their dreams have treated of this theme, and the outline of its development can be traced in their records. Unconscious fantasy, on the whole, follows in the wake of conscious thought, only here and there in the person of spiritual genius forestalling the ideas of many generations ahead. Whether we examine the records of medieval dreams and fantasies, or whether we analyse those of to-day, we see the same course pursued towards a better understanding of the essential nature of the conflict.

We find a tendency to two opposite forms of error, the tendency to mistake the flesh for the devil and call it entirely bad, and the tendency to mistake the flesh for the divine and call it entirely good. We see also each of these two mistakes gradually corrected and the flesh assigned a truer *rôle* as in itself neither good nor

<sup>1</sup> See Frazer, "The Golden Bough," "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., Vol. II., pp. 118-119; "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul," 3rd ed., pp. 163-164.

bad, but capable of being used for either good or evil ends. We will now look at some typical dreams which illustrate phases of the conflict.

The error of calling the flesh the devil underlies asceticism, which imposes celibacy on the ground that passionate love between the sexes is mainly lust and incompatible with the desire for perfection and self-mastery.<sup>1</sup> The puritanical view is the same, but not carried to its logical conclusion.

In medieval times people believed in the actual existence of witches and demons, and since these were the purest embodiment of evil known to them they dreamed of their own sexual promptings in the guise of witches and demons. In the dream of to-day the witch is more often replaced by the gypsy, the sturdy beggar or incorrigible rogue, who frightens us by his persistency or piques us with his familiarity.

Here is a dream in which the Freudian sexuality in the unconscious first appears as repulsive and vile, but later changes to something divine and beautiful.

*"Bruno bishop of Toul (afterwards in 1049 Pope Leo IX.) saw in his dream a deformed old woman who haunted him with great persistency and treated him with great familiarity. She was hideously ugly, clothed in filthy rags, her hair dishevelled, and altogether one could scarce recognise in her the human form. Disgusted with her general appearance Bruno tried to avoid her; but the more he shrunk from her the more she clung to him. Annoyed by this importunity, Bruno made the sign of the cross; whereupon she fell to the earth as dead and rose up again lovely as an angel."*<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes the dream presents a series of metamorphoses. The wolf turns into a witch, the witch into a hare, the hare into a child. Sometimes the metamorphosis is from death to life; the dry bones live, the gruesome carcase of a gypsy that sways to and fro in the water comes to life and stretches out a clammy

<sup>1</sup> See H. O. Taylor, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> Wibert, "Life of St. Leo IX.," Book I., Chap. I.

hand. We thought we had got rid of our fleshly passions, but they still live.

The dream of our sexuality as repulsive vermin or a dangerous wild beast is too familiar to need illustration. It is often a horrible nightmare stirring the depth of human fear. But the unconscious is not always in deadly earnest. It can show humour as well, and even seem to laugh at itself. A patient undergoing treatment by psycho-analysis dreamed he was pursued by a tiger. The dream began with every circumstance of terror, but ended by his popping the tiger into the water-butt and pumping on to it, remarking as he did so "Many waters cannot quench love."

The second unconscious fallacy, that of regarding the promptings of the flesh as divine, also finds expression in medieval dreams and fantasies.

The ascetic view of the base character of sexual love brought its reaction in the conscious and unconscious alike. Longing for spiritual perfection led the monk to asceticism, but the animal nature he depreciated kept his fantasies in the world of fleshly desire. In the dreams and visions of monks and nuns Christ assumes the rôle of love-object. He speaks in the unconscious romance of Sister Mechthilde of Magdeburg as a beautiful youth inviting her "to the midday couch of love" where she may "cool herself with him."<sup>1</sup>

Liutgard of Tongern, a Benedictine nun about 1213, has a vision of "Christ as a white lamb. The lamb rests a foot on each of her shoulders, sets his mouth to hers and draws out sweetest song."<sup>2</sup> This fantasy is expressive of her repressed sexuality which her unconscious mind regards, not as a temptation of the devil, but an allurements of the Lord.

The majority of people no doubt took the Church's word for it that the promptings of the flesh were the

<sup>1</sup> Date about 1212. See Taylor, "The Mediæval Mind," ed. 1911, Vol. I., p. 468,

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 463.

work of the devil, but they turned the edge of so hard a saying by picturing the devil himself as more fool than knave. The devil of the Middle Ages in one of his most common aspects "was essentially animal both in form and instinct, his chief all-absorbing passion being lust."<sup>1</sup> He was often portrayed as an easily gulled and childish creature with no real harm in him. Even St. Jerome helped to take away from his serious diabolic character when he asserted that he had seen satyrs, "little men with curved nostrils with the horns and feet of a goat."<sup>2</sup>

Witches were examined during their trials for evidence of their fleshly intercourse with the devil,<sup>3</sup> and were themselves supposed to be the offspring of lesser demons, for there was a universal belief that Incubi and Succubi, devils male and female, visited people in their sleep and lured them to intercourse, the fruit whereof were monsters, sorcerers and witches. The famous Bull of Innocent VIII., 1484, assumes the truth of this accusation in the case of "many persons of both sexes, forgetful of their own salvation and falling away from the Catholic faith."<sup>4</sup>

Just as the devil of the Middle Ages when he stands for the flesh loses his devilish character, so the dangerous wild beast or vermin in the modern dream becomes domesticated. In the course of education of the unconscious the confusion of categories between animal and diabolic clears up, the wild beast in the dream drops his devilish attributes. Here are two typical dreams treating of the subject. The first is that of a middle-aged working-class woman brought up to regard sexual feelings as non-existent in woman and base in man. She is devout and religious and earnestly desirous of "cleansing her soul from all unrighteousness."

<sup>1</sup> Elworthy, "Horns of Honour," 1900, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> "A History of Witchcraft in England, 1558-1718," Notestein, 911, pp. 156-157.

<sup>4</sup> Tylor, "Primitive Culture," Vol. II., 3rd ed., pp. 189-191.

"I was going to do some washing. The copper was alight and the tubs and the clothes were all ready when I heard a strange noise, and something like a rat ran round the room. I said 'I do hope it won't run in the fire; it will be burnt.' Then it ran towards me and escaped where I stood, and I saw it was not a rat but a little kitten with a strangely shaped head. I thought 'What a shame to let anything live that is so deformed.'"

Her own animal nature is seen to be no longer terrifying and repulsive like a rat, but attractive (though immature) like a kitten; it is, however, deformed and not humanely treated.

The next is the dream of a sophisticated and self-critical man whose view of sexuality is also tinged by the puritanical fallacy.

"A wild animal approaches, more like a fox-cub than anything, but I called it a stoat and was afraid of it. As soon as it catches sight of us it flies, and there is a hue and cry after it, my dog in hot pursuit. It escapes to a place of safety for the moment, but next moment it is surrounded, and I seem unable to prevent a horrible ending when suddenly it 'gives in,' yawns, walks quietly up to my dog and the two rub noses in a friendly manner. It turns then into a boy, and yet at the same time remains a stoat, and I wake up saying in a pleased way, 'It's going to have its face washed now.' I have had mine washed and it wasn't so bad as one feared."

The dreamer's animal nature is first regarded as vermin to be destroyed, then as a good thing in its way, to be tamed and domesticated, and, lastly, it is seen to have much in it that is distinctively human, but childish, in need of cleansing, training and development.

The basis of truth underlying the first fallacy—that the flesh is the devil—is one we are not likely to miss, descended as we are from a long line of puritans. Its unconscious power is seen in the heat with which the modern novelist tilts against its exaggerations.

The truth underlying the second fallacy—that the flesh is divine—is put with great insight by St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

“ Yet because we are of the flesh and are begotten through the flesh’s concupiscence, our yearning love must begin from the flesh ; yet if rightly directed, advancing under the leadership of grace, it will be consummated in spirit. For that which is first is not spiritual but that which is animal ; then that which is spiritual.” <sup>1</sup>

Sister Mechthilde grasps the same truth.

“ God has granted to all creatures to follow their natures ; how can I withstand mine ? To God will I go, who is my Father by nature, my Brother through His humility, my Bridegroom through love, and I am His forever.” <sup>2</sup>

Another universal theme of the dreams of civilised man is the clothing dream, the difficulty of getting appropriate, or the anxiety due to inappropriate, clothing. How to fit the “ natural man ” of the unconscious for taking his part in the life of a civilised society. In dreams of this class we are not clothed, we are naked like the primitive or the child ; or half clothed, as one who has begun to be civilised but cannot go on with it ; or unsuitably clothed, with habits of thought and feeling that do not belong to our society, or our age or sex. The man who had not on a wedding garment is an example of this. He could not meet the demands of progress.

In another type of dream we are well satisfied with our nakedness. It may stand for childishness and childish exhibitionism or childlikeness and desire for innocence as the case may be ; only the associations can show.<sup>3</sup>

The conflict between contemplation and action, the desire for a busy, effective life and the desire for inner

<sup>1</sup> Quoted H. O. Taylor, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Chap. XVII., p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 469.

<sup>3</sup> See Freud, “ Interpretation of Dreams,” 1913, p. 206 ; *cf.* M. Aurelius, “ Wilt thou, then, my soul, never be good and simple and one and naked, more manifest than the body which surrounds thee ? ” X. 1. Trans. Long.

repose, is probably another universal theme bordering on the myth; the anxiety dreams in which we try to do things and fail. They are always things that belong to a bustling active life. We try to catch a train, to pack a trunk, to do our work (whatever it may be) and are in anguish of mind because we fail; our legs refuse to move, or everything goes wrong. Dreams of this type may have direct sexual significance too. They certainly show the repressed desire for repose, to stop *doing* things and simply *be*. They do not necessarily imply that the dreamer is doing too much, the reverse may be the case; they show that his energy is employed unsuitably to his nature or that in his conscious mind he values himself too much by what he does, and unconsciously he rebels against this judgment and asserts his claim to be valued for what he is. The dream expresses an intense desire to do, and an unconscious desire to thwart the busybody in himself; it is, as Freud puts it, "the disguised fulfilment of a repressed wish."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Freud, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

## CHAPTER X

### VARIOUS POINTS CONNECTED WITH DREAM INTERPRETATION

*"The Door of Death I open found  
And the worm weaving in the ground :  
Thou'rt my Mother from the womb ;  
Wife, Sister, Daughter, to the tomb ;  
Weaving to Dreams the Sexual Strife  
And weeping over the Web of Life."*

—WILLIAM BLAKE.

BEFORE leaving the subject of dreams, we will examine further some points that have been raised which are likely to present difficulties to the would-be interpreter, so that this chapter consists of more or less scattered remarks which group themselves under five headings.

First as regards *the symbolism of dreams and the unconscious choice of symbols*. We are often puzzled to know what a dream figure represents because we are blocked by the emotion which the dream arouses. The solution of the puzzle, as already emphasised, lies in our uncontrolled associations, the ideas that are allowed to flow freely in connection with the dream. Unconscious resistance may check their flow ; it is not always within our power to find associations. In that case we can only wait, taking notice of any that come along, especially of those which seem irrelevant or distasteful. It may happen in the course of the day that something reminds us of our dream and we hit upon an associated idea in that way.

If we fail to discover what a dream figure symbolises, later dreams are likely to supply the clue, for if the dream express a deep-rooted emotional conflict and not a merely passing one we shall be sure to have other dreams bearing on the same theme.

The point for which the unconscious selects a dream personage as symbolic is just as likely to be an adventitious as a characteristic quality, and the same person may figure one night standing for one thing, another for something quite different. Thus he might be selected because he is old or young to represent "growing old," or "remaining young in spirit," or he might be chosen for the literal meaning of his surname.

Our dreams are generally bearing on our own emotional difficulties of the moment, and if these are consciously focussed for the time being on some particular person, we may dream of him direct. But if we do not recognise the fact and are reluctant to do so, we are more likely to dream of him in a disguised form. Thus a woman did not realise that she was jealous of a neighbour with whom she was most friendly. Her dream showed that she had feelings of jealousy towards Queen Elizabeth, and she thought of Queen Elizabeth as "someone who possessed a lot of fine clothes, like my neighbour X." Another dreamt of the breaking off of her engagement under the symbol of the death of her brother.<sup>1</sup>

The link between the dream figure and the more plainly significant symbolic figure for which it stands may be a play upon words. In a dream the Archbishop of Canterbury stood for "lamb" *via* Canterbury lamb, and represented a not very sympathetic symbol of "childish innocence." A marsh in one dream meant "the slough of despond," in another "religious enthusiasm," from its association with one Catherine Marsh, an evangelical.

<sup>1</sup> For the symbolic forms under which patients dream of their psychoanalyst see a paper by Dr. Constance Long on "Psycho-analytic Use of Subliminal Material," p. 27. *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. XXX., January, 1918.

Where dreams are vague, confused and muddled, as is so often the case, and difficult to catch hold of, the "muddle" is symbolic of the muddled state of the dreamer's ideas on the topic of the dream. If the muddle is painful the dream represents his desire to clear his ideas and his conflicting desire to leave them confused and vague and so to avoid the responsibility of a definite choice.

Everyone has an inner life of the emotions lived alongside of an outer life of principle and conduct, and it is to the inner life that his dreams belong.

Freud finds that dreams frequently go back "to childish impressions that are remembered obscurely or not at all, and that often date back to the first three years of life."<sup>1</sup> With neurotics there is marked dissociation between the inner and outer life, and probably their dreams refer to scenes of childhood connected with the obstructions to sexual development in which the neurosis originated. Where the two lives are harmonised dreams are mostly about recent impressions.

Sometimes we repeat in our dreams the things we have been doing in the day, or pursue a train of thought which has been engaging our attention, and it may be we pursue it to good purpose. The meaning of dreams of this sort, too, will lie in the symbolical significance of the thoughts and actions dreamed. We shall not repeat the actions of the day unless they happen fitly to symbolise some unconscious desire. If I have been gardening, I dig the soil of the unconscious in my dreams, fertilise its barren spaces, tend its seeds. If I have been "tidying up" in the day, in the night I tidy up my mind; I sweep the dust from the floor of my soul, scrub its dirty corners, explore its neglected shelves and forgotten cupboards. If I have been planning or composing a literary work by day, in my dreams I compose the conflicting tendencies of my inner life and develop its drama. There is no occupa-

<sup>1</sup> Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 171.

tion of the day that does not aptly express our unconscious desires at some time or other. We do not need to have been driving or cooking or playing cricket lately to account for the dreams in which we control a mettlesome four-in-hand or urge along a tired old donkey ; in which we produce half-baked cakes and puddings from the oven, or make a magnificent drive to long-on or cut to point. A lady dreamed of a game of lawn tennis to express the unconscious conviction that there were "faults on both sides." I forget now who the antagonists were ; they may have been tyranny *versus* rebellion, flesh *versus* spirit, hate *versus* love, or indulgent fondness for her daughter *versus* impatient criticism.

As we have seen, *a dream of someone's death or funeral*, or illness expresses, amongst other things, a measure of desire for the event dreamed of, both for the actual death of the person dreamed dead, and for the spiritual death of whatever he stands for in the soul. It is not on their own merits that people so often unconsciously wish the death of their nearest by the tie of blood, but on the merits of the peculiar bondage we like to think involved in the relation and against which we unconsciously rebel.

The deaths of people unknown to us are often dreamed of simply for the sake of the thing for which they stand. A psycho-analytic patient who dreaded having to consider sexual questions dreamed that Edward Carpenter was dead, an author known to him only as a writer on sexual problems. One who was beginning to realise the urgent necessity of striking out a bolder line of inner independence dreamed of the death of Lord Minto—a Viceroy who stood to the dreamer for one who had tried to bring freedom to India, but whose measures were not sufficiently bold.

*The physical stimulus*, as we have seen, is one source of a dream image, from the psycho-analyst's point of view, no more interesting than any other. Unless it

happen to provide a fitting symbol, the noise, or pain, or sensation may wake the sleeper but it will not enter his dream.<sup>1</sup> A disordered digestion will furnish one person with the material for a nightmare, another for a dream of Heaven, another for a dream with nothing unusual about it except its vividness.

The following illustration shows how the dreams occasioned by a liver attack vary with the character of the unconscious problems of the moment. The dreamer writes: "When my liver was upset I used to get dreadful nightmares. *The scheme always used to be that something dark, shadowy and ominous was approaching my bed. As the mysterious form came nearer my terror increased till I was bathed in perspiration. At last it was actually upon me, and at that moment, just as I was paralysed with fear, there was a terrific explosion, a blaze of light, a feeling of pins and needles over my face and body, and the whole thing vanished, only, however, to be repeated.* I have had no nightmare or feeling of nightmare since I was analysed, but I still have liver attacks, and they seem to produce unusual dreams. The last I had was typical. *I saw across a dark passage through an open door into a lighted room where some soldiers sat, being taught knitting by a lady. The dream was so vivid as to be mistaken by me for waking life, and I rose to join the pleasing group. As I did so the whole thing exploded in a blaze of light, with a feeling of pins and needles all over me and a most unpleasant jerk back to consciousness, but there was nothing frightening about it.*"

Here, it will be noticed, we have the same kind of physical sensations figuring in both dreams; in each the climax is an explosion in the ears and a blaze of light in the eyes, while each ends in abrupt awakening.

<sup>1</sup> If sufficiently intense, it must either wake him or be woven into his dream, so that the wish to go on sleeping will ensure the latter course being taken wherever possible; see Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 197

Formerly, the unconscious background was peopled with terrific and mysterious beings representing sexual propensities feared and repressed, not understood or consciously dealt with. These took advantage of the occasion, as it were, to occupy the dream stage in the shape of horrid ghosts. The later dream expresses, as might any other, the problem of the moment, in this case a desire to learn the womanly art of creating "comforts."

In analysing a dream we must bear in mind the important distinction pointed out by Jung between *the dream's significance on the relatively objective and on the relatively subjective plane of interpretation*.<sup>1</sup> Some examples will illustrate the difference.

(1) *Someone dreams of a beloved and respected friend who, to the dreamer's dismay, treats him with great unkindness.*

Objectively the dream means that there is a want of sympathy between the dreamer and his friend which gives him pain, though he may not be aware of it, or may not admit it. One is inclined to take the meaning of such a dream literally and seek reassurance from the friend who might be as little aware as the dreamer of any underlying want of sympathy between them.

Subjectively, the dream means that the dreamer is unkind to himself. He is impatient and unsympathetic with certain traits in his character which are very much "himself," and instead of recognising this lack of patience and sympathy as harsh and deplorable (which harshness *ipso facto* must be), he pictures it as an admirable side of his nature, like his friend, one to be appreciated and cultivated. An unthought-out attitude is shown and resulting unhappiness.

<sup>1</sup> Compared with the typical mental activity of waking life, the dream is all "subjective," but Jung's distinction marks different degrees of subjectivity.

(2) *Someone dreams he is reunited to a relative long lost through death or estrangement.*

On the objective plane of interpretation, the dream shows a friendly feeling for the relative in question and a wish to be at one with him.

On the subjective plane, it shows the desire for the recovery of some forgotten or mishandled side of the dreamer's personality whose reconciliation increases his well-being. The deceased relative, for instance, might represent the firm and resolute or the mild and gentle side of his own character.

(3) *Someone dreams that he welcomes the Queen to a newly-opened emporium.*

His immediate associations show that the Queen stands for his mother and the new shop for the new home for which he is hoping. The symbols of the dream refer back to another set of symbols, but the meaning is still on the objective plane. Objectively, it represents a desire to have a fine new home and to welcome his mother to it. Subjectively, his mother stands for something in himself, very likely his mother-complex; and the emporium stands for a view of the house of his soul as new and full of valuable things. It shows that whatever is represented by his mother survives a change of mental outlook and still gains from him that kind of regard which he devotes to royal personages.

The importance of a dream's objective meaning must not be underrated. The unconscious mind shows its character by its choice of symbols, which are selected by it because of their emotional fitness. The dream shows the kind of emotion with which the topic of the dream is regarded in the dreamer's unconscious mind at the moment, and the unconscious becomes educated by conscious criticism of this. The dreamer may learn that he has an unconscious tendency to treat a subject cynically or sentimentally or flippantly which consciously he views in another light.

It has been pointed out by Jung and Bleuler that the split personalities of hysterics and mediums, like dream characters, have a subjective meaning which is missed when they are exploited for their special scientific interest and attention is given exclusively to their objective meaning. Thus Jung gives an account of a Swiss girl whose trance personalities represented different traits in her own nature each struggling for predominance. When the unconscious conflict was settled in accordance with natural growth the abnormal condition ceased.<sup>1</sup>

*The sexuality of dreams* would often be less distressing to the dreamer if the distinction were borne in mind between the objective and subjective meaning.<sup>2</sup> Even where the subjective meaning of a dream is the expression of sexual desire, this in turn has a wider symbolical significance. Sometimes the sexuality is only marked on the objective plane. After all, the physical union between the sexes is a world-old and honourable symbol for every form of mystical union, including spiritual union of the self with whatever is best and highest in the soul of man.

When I dream of a passionate embrace with someone, the important question raised by such a dream is what does the person represent towards whom in the unconscious I express this intimate attachment. For example, the beloved may symbolise my infantility, and the subjective meaning of the dream be a reaction against progress—a weariness of well-doing; or he may stand for my spiritual ideal, my best self, and the dream express an ardent striving towards perfection; he may mean my sloth, my pet vice, or any evil trait in myself which is strong and unrealised or has lately been repressed, and equally he may mean any repressed desire which belongs to my undeveloped “better nature.”

<sup>1</sup> Jung, “Collected Papers,” 2nd ed., p. 30, and Bleuler in Jung’s “Word-Association,” 1918, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, Chap. VII., p. 92.

The embrace may take a disguised form, as in the dream quoted of Liutgard.<sup>1</sup> Here one meaning of the dream is "I desire physical embraces," but that in its turn has a deeper subjective meaning "I desire the free expression and unhindered development of my own emotional nature."

The objective embrace in a dream may express a subjective longing of the soul for Christ—a fact well recognised by the theologians of the Middle Ages—and on the other hand the objective figure of Christ in a dream (in Liutgard's as "the Lamb of God") may express the subjective repressed sexual appetite. Both desires are human; neither of them things to be ashamed of, though the old puritanical view of the matter seems to cling to psycho-analytic writers. Both Freud and Jung sometimes write as though they adopted the point of view of their neurotic patients and found the mere fact of sexuality in man to be repulsive and regrettable. This bias is marked when they touch on the theme of the hysteria of the saints, Jung even accusing the unconscious, which cannot lie, of "a sentimental and ethically worthless pose" when in the mind of a pious person it recasts the erotic into a religious mould.<sup>2</sup>

Precisely what desires the dream expresses and whether the more important meaning for the dreamer is the objective or the subjective one, the associations alone can show. That illustrious scoundrel Benvenuto Cellini, as well as St. Francis, had visions of Christ and the Madonna. Their associations would doubtless have been very different. When in prison and expecting death, Cellini had a trance experience in the middle of which he was gazing upon the sun, when, he says, "*I saw the centre of the sun swell and bulge out, and in a moment there appeared a Christ upon the cross formed of the self-same matter as the sun; and so gracious*

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, Chap. IX., p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Jung, "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916, p. 82.

and pleasing was *His aspect*, that no human imagination could ever form so much as a faint idea of such beauty. Then the sun bulged out again and a further figure appeared of the Madonna between two angels of divine beauty, and "a figure dressed in sacerdotal robes who," he says, "turned its back towards me and looked towards the Blessed Virgin, holding Christ in her arms."<sup>1</sup>

Two types of sexuality which frequently find expression in dreams may be mentioned here.<sup>2</sup> One is *Masochism*, the finding sexual gratification in suffering pain inflicted by a sexually attractive object. A common instance of this is the kind of pleasure some women get when their husbands hit them, literally in the uneducated classes, metaphorically in the more refined. Similarly, the kind of pleasure some men get when their wives lash out at them with the tongue. The ecstasy of the Juggernaut's victim is an extreme example. He experiences a thrill akin to bliss as the pitiless car rolls over his prostrate body.<sup>3</sup> *Sadism* is the complementary feeling, the reverse side of the shield from Masochism, the kind of pleasure gained by inflicting pain upon a sexually attractive object. It is seen in the man who knocks his wife about because he has a feeling for her. It is well recognised in certain forms of cruelty to animals, as well as in the fascination of bloody spectacles, such as bull fights, slaughter and executions. A good example of an outbreak of sadist-masochistic craving is seen in the history of the Flagellants. We read that in 1260 during a great religious revival following on famine and pestilence "the Flagellants came through the whole world; and all men both small and great, noble knights and men of the people,

<sup>1</sup> B. Cellini, "Memoirs," ed. Roscoe, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> See Pfister, "The Psycho-analytic Method," ed. 1916, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the "Convulsionaires," of Paris, 1724-1736. The patients were "belaboured by the strongest men," and "a sensation of pleasure was experienced, which increased with the violence used." Ennemoser, "History of Magic," trans. 1893, Vol. I., p. 74.

scourged themselves naked in procession through the cities, with the Bishops and men of Religion at their head."<sup>1</sup>

Many men must have revolted against behaviour which they instinctively felt was morbid. We find that the crowd defended themselves against the disintegrating effect of such criticism by invoking the authority-complex on its own behalf. "Moreover, if any would not scourge himself, he was held worse than the Devil, and all pointed their finger at him as a notorious man and a limb of Satan; and what is more within a short time he would fall into some mishap, either of death or of grievous sickness."

It is obvious to the student of the unconscious mind that masochistic and sadistic cravings still gain unconscious expression of every degree of refinement or crudity. They are conspicuous in a sublimated form, for example, in such novels as "*Wuthering Heights*," and they are recognisable as more crudely, though still unconsciously, expressed in some modern poetry, and in certain devotional themes such as lingering descriptions of the Passion and accounts of the fate of lost souls in hell, wherein physical torture is literally gloated over.<sup>2</sup> The masochism and sadism here displayed are unconscious, and they appeal to a form of sexuality which is latent in the unconscious minds of their readers. These tendencies are not evil in themselves, any more than is the fierce appetite of hunger, but harm results when they are mistaken for what they are not, spiritual emotions and desires of an idealistic kind.

Both tendencies appear in dreams. An educated woman, extremely fond of horses, dreamed that she thrashed a sensitive thoroughbred unmercifully, another that she inflicted torture upon a child. Such repressed

<sup>1</sup> Fra. Salimbene, ed. Coulton, p. 192, "From St. Francis to Dante," 1906.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, Catholic Truth Society, publication D 253, and "The Precious Blood."

Sadism shows the need for a greater outlet of emotion and energy in daily life where the sadist has capacity for ruling others by the strength, the masochist by the persuasiveness of his personality.

A word may be said here on *the repetition and coalescence of dream images*. Often the different parts of a dream repeat the same theme ; or that theme may be expressed by three or four different analogies, each distinguishable but not distinguished in the dream, but coalescing, going along together, as it were blended. *Composite dream characters*, so called, are an instance of this. They are not quite like Prof. Galton's composite photographs, where the originals merge their identity in a new or composite type distinct in character. The dream composite person does not *resemble* three or four different people, he *is* each of them. I would suggest that here the categories of resemblance and identity are confused in the unconscious as in the mind of primitive man, who has never yet distinguished them. Thus a man who had a difficult friendship dreamed of someone who was each of three different people who appeared to have nothing in common, a certain fussy old gentleman, a certain calm dignified lady, and a certain rather oily, ecclesiastical kind of layman. He remembered that each of these three people had abruptly cast off a friend.

This failure to distinguish between resemblance and identity seems to me to account for the mysterious feeling about a dream that it had a tremendous import, but one not expressible in words. A dream does, in fact, sometimes belong to a pre-linguistic stage of mental experience, and we cannot express it without developing and so altering it. A student of psychoanalysis describes a dream-fantasy of the kind. He had been bicycling and got cramp in his foot. "*Now that I am awake and look back, I realise that I was stretching out my leg in various directions to get rid of the cramp, and succeeding at each attempt. But*

at the time I wasn't exactly stretching my foot to dispel the cramp, I was doing something of deep significance. I was living an experience which was in itself a complete 'mix-up' of two or three different ideas. I was smoothing out the coils of a psycho-analytic 'complex' as I encountered it on the surface where it was 'touched-up,' and I was experiencing the relation of the 'particular' to the 'universal' because the complex was my particular complex, but by smoothing it out I did a thing of universal import, since it was also a human or universal complex. Then I was at the same time living the experience that 'charity begins at home' because good was being done within a small, homely, and definitely circumscribed area. But the leading theme, or the dominant note of the theme, was yet another idea; I was learning, with great interest, from this experience, that a thing might appear merely negative and destructive and yet be positive and constructive in effect—for this tentative and instinctive movement of my leg which was prompted solely by the impulse to get rid of pain had a positive and constructive effect; it not only destroyed the pain, it made my leg and foot each time well and able. As I describe that last idea I falsify it, for what was made 'well and able' and useful, wasn't exactly my leg and foot, it was 'that which was getting rid of the coils of a complex at various points.' It was as though each time I straightened out the cramp, that was a something made well and a positive gain. The continuity of the one leg and foot wasn't observed, it seemed as if I were getting quite a number of 'usefuls' not definitely recognised at all as 'my leg and foot.' "

In the dream-consciousness of a psycho-analyst the blind flapping in the wind is a certain patient's problem which is becoming solved with each new bout of flapping.

Composite words, like composite figures, mean each of the words they suggest. "*I advance by slossom*

*and slom and slom,*" turned out from its associations to mean a desire to resolve the conflict between æsthetic aversion to the ugly, and ethical desire for the good. The one made the dreamer turn in horror from the problem of poverty, the other drove her towards it. The dream associations were, "I seem to see Swinburne going for a country walk with a Baptist minister. Blossom, cherry trees in May, and all that is lovely. Slum—hideous and misshapen bodies and minds in squalid, dark, mal-odorous surroundings." The path of advance fused the two.

*The morality of dreams* is a much discussed topic. Many people are afraid of the immoral tendencies to be found in their dreams, but our dreams cannot make us bad, they can at most show us how bad (or good) we are. A dream which shocks us at first, when analysed, may reveal morally good tendencies which are repressed, while a dream that pleases us may turn out to express evil tendencies. One is as helpful to morality as the other.

The question has been raised, Are we moral in our dreams at all, are we not rather non-moral, without a feeling for right and wrong? According to the view of the unconscious taken in this book, we are undoubtedly moral in our dreams, but our morality is that of the unconscious self, and where this is not in harmony with the conscious our dreams will often appear to be immoral, just as the "savage" appears to be immoral to the ignorant observer. The dream's morality, like its intellectuality, belongs to a more primitive stage of mental development than that of our waking life, one in which our present moral distinctions are implicit only, as they are in early childhood.<sup>1</sup>

We are said to lose the sense of decency in dreams, but often when a dream appears on waking to be

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, the child recognises the moral obligation of "thou shalt not kill," towards its mother before it does towards its brothers and sisters. For morality of children, see Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 212.

indecent that is because we are dreaming of private things. It is not indecent to be naked in the course of our toilet. Apparently indecent conduct may be merely the unconscious symbol for privacy. The repressed desire for more privacy in our lives, more time for meeting the demands of the inner or private life, is often symbolised in dreams in homely form, we are trying to be alone and private and find difficulties in the way.

If our dreams show a deficient sense of decency, if we seem in them to enjoy being indecent, this may be a reaction against prudery in the conscious or an expression of sexuality on a level with childish "exhibitionism," belonging to a "pre-decent" stage of development such as is well recognised in savages, in small children, and perhaps in the wall paintings of the Early Egyptians.<sup>1</sup>

People exhibit their individual moral character just as much in their dreams as in their waking thoughts and actions, and as their conscious moral ideal develops their dreams alter in character. As with conscious morality, the morality of the dream will sometimes convey our own innate moral judgment, sometimes the judgment of our social group taken over uncritically. It is this undeveloped group-morality which is expressed when a man of merely normal sexual passions has the dangerous wild beast nightmare.<sup>2</sup>

A doubt on the point of whether dreams are moral has arisen from confusion of thought. The unconscious mind confuses idea and act, but this confusion must be dropped when we bring conscious criticism to bear on the morality of the dream. The distinction between

<sup>1</sup> The nakedness of Egyptian figures would seem to have much the same significance as the signs for male and female in the Zoo catalogue. See Frazer's, "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., Vol. II., pp. 118-119.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, Chap. IX, p. 117. St. Augustine, who is often quoted on the immorality of dreams, had more than merely normal sexual passions, which were freely expressed in the conscious till the age of thirty-four. No wonder that after his conversion they found expression in his dreams. See "Confessions" of St. Augustine.

an immoral thought and an immoral act is as great for us when we are judging the unconscious as when we are judging the conscious. No greater moral responsibility attaches to dream images, the things we dream we do, than attaches to conscious ideas which remain ideas and do not pass over into acts. It is just as immoral to dream that we kill a person as it is to feel a moment's hatred of him in the day-time, but no more so. The two things are equivalent. The equivalent of murder would be the dreamer not dreaming that he did a murder—but actually committing a murder in a somnambulistic or trance state.

Those people who are surprised at the evil deeds they do in dreams must be singularly blind to the evil desires that enter their minds by day but do not gain a footing. Perhaps they expel them from the conscious so promptly and effectually that their unconscious minds are concerned with little else. Exaggerated self-discipline, however benevolently administered, involves repression and repressed desires form the material of our dreams. James's method of directing the mind to good ideas and expelling bad ones tends to drive these undesirable ideas into the unconscious, whence they find expression in dreams.<sup>1</sup>

The more harmonious a life is the more do the conscious and unconscious spheres of the mind co-operate with and amplify each other. Even the archaic symbolic structure of dreams tends to disappear when both sides of the mind are directed to one object, and dreams are sometimes a continuation of waking thoughts hardly distinct in character. In this case, too, they are symbolic of subjective concerns, but where the immediate concern of the unconscious is the normal path of human

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, "Principles of Psychology," 1901, Vol. II., p. 467. The man who is a "ponderous and bilious slumbering volcano, let him repress the expression of his passions as he will, will find them expire if they get no vent at all." See also "Talks to Teachers," 1901, where Prof. James advocates "inhibition by substitution," whereby "the inhibiting idea supersedes altogether the idea which it inhibits, and the latter quickly vanishes from the field," pp. 192-193.

progress what conscious interest is there which will not aptly symbolise it ?

We are only on the threshold of the study of dreams in the light of Freud's discoveries, and to a great extent it is inevitable that we should find in them what we look for. This is equally true of any other sphere of human observation. Compare what the modern chemist sees in the sun to what Aristotle saw. We only find in any phenomenon what we are capable of observing, what has a meaning which we can understand. If our view of the unconscious mind be substantially a true one, then each and every conscious interest and emotion must have its origin and echo in the unconscious. Only a few of these have so far been found. For instance, one of the most potent of unconscious motives to-day is "love of money." All thoughtful men and women, of whatever school of thought, declare themselves to-day to be profoundly dissatisfied with the existing distribution of wealth and its incidental injustice. Psycho-analysts, so far, do not seem to have come across the poverty-complex, perhaps because they happen to be people with a strong bias to individualism which prevents them from seeing the crying need of the age as one for man's social rather than his individual development.<sup>1</sup> Many rich men nowadays praise poverty in their waking life—for others. Do none of them still wed her in their dreams for themselves ?

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Jung, "Collected Papers," 2nd ed., pp. 270-271.

## CHAPTER XI

### TWO PRESENT-DAY DREAMS ANALYSED

*"To dream is nothing else but to think sleeping; and we have abundance of deep-headed gentlemen among us, who give us ample testimony that they dream waking."*—DE FOE.

WE will conclude the subject of dreams with two examples of a more detailed analysis than any given in the previous chapters. Both dreams illustrate the father-complex.

The first is a dream of the elusive type already noticed, where symbols coalesce and yet remain distinct. This kind of dream is very common. "I've been dreaming hard all night," we say, "about *something*, but I can't tell you what it was." We have an idea, but it is one that cannot be expressed. Now when an idea cannot be expressed in words, it is not because there are no words that will express it, approximately, at any rate, to ourselves, it is that we have not grasped it sufficiently clearly to make the attempt. In our unconscious thought, like primitive man, we "confuse categories" and confuse them to such an extent that we seem to speak another language from that of the waking consciousness in which categories are distinct; upon waking we cannot pick up the thread. The unconscious mind thinks by means of analogy—similarity of relations. It sees analogies more far fetched even than those of Browning, and, like his, they are far-fetched because

they are so near and homely as to be overlooked. Browning sees, for instance, in mottled beans an analogy to the relation between good and evil in life.<sup>1</sup> The unconscious mind finds all kinds of meanings in such things as one's bodily sensations, the way the bed-clothes are adjusted, the angle at which one is lying in the bed, and so on. These ideas are hard to catch hold of, partly because they are not the kind of analogies that one consciously dwells on, and partly because of the confusion of the categories of resemblance and identity. We do not seem, in our dream consciousness, to think "the difference between the right leg and the left is *like* the difference between right and wrong"; as far as our thought can be expressed, it is "this and this other" and we mean "the right and left leg" and at the same time we also mean "right and wrong." Sometimes we hold two or three such analogies at one and the same time in the unconscious mind, and in that case they will seem to *be* each other, and each will also seem to *be* the thing to which it bears a resemblance and which it consequently symbolises.

This mode of thinking in dreams helps us to understand the ease with which primitive man identifies his gods with one another. To the ancient Egyptian his gods *are* each other in so far as they present similar aspects of power, of beneficence or what not. The cultivated mind that finds this notion so self-contradictory and difficult to grasp has yet to make the acquaintance of its own hinterland, where resemblance and identity are still confused in just the same manner. To the Ancient Egyptian the goddess of fertility is the rich plain of the Delta, and she was also the cow, and every other "fertile," as naturally as to the dreamer to-day good (as against evil) is the part of the bed on which the clothes remain (as against the part from which they have slipped) and also is the right side of his body (as against the left).

<sup>1</sup> "Ferishtah's Fancies: Bean-stripes."

Our dream is that of a man of fifty-one, an energetic, kindly, cultivated individual, inclined to be nervous and over-anxious. He has never married or fallen in love with a woman, and though a faithful friend he has had a series of difficult friendships which have contributed to the want of repose and harmony that is conspicuous in his character.

In what follows a distinction is made between the dream and its associations as given by the dreamer (who was used to studying his own dreams) and the comment supplied by the analyst.

DREAM: "My dream is difficult to describe. It seemed to go on at intervals all through the night. I woke up with the strong conviction that 'it was all coming right.' That was what I said to myself, 'Things *will* all come right.' (1) The principal theme of dream consciousness was the position in which I was lying in bed. There were three positions in succession, and the three made one night's rest. The first wasn't comfortable, it was even painful in itself, but it was a useful preparation for the second—if you're uncomfortable on your left side you find it a relief when you turn over on to your right. The second started by seeming all right, but it too would become uncomfortable in time and have to be changed for a third, and the third might look like a return to the first, but it wouldn't be a mere repetition of the first—this time it might not hurt at all. That was the principal theme, but mixed up with that, and as it were *identified* with it, were two others. (2) One was this: I am going to do some work for my father and I must find a bed to sleep in while I'm doing it. I'm worried, but I needn't be worried for I shall find a bed all right. First a brother will give me one, then a sister, and by that time we shall know where the third bed will be, and the three together will cover the whole time in question. (3) The other was this: The thesis I am writing has three parts. It might seem as though the third part repeated the

first, but it doesn't really. The middle part, which is quite short, takes you on to a different level so that you go over the old ground again with a new insight and see it differently.

The dream sounds clear as I describe it, and it was *clear* in a way, but not 'clear cut.' There seemed to be no end *in* it, and I was an actor, not a spectator, doing, not criticising. I was *living* the three different positions in bed, and the arranging to get lodged while I worked for my father, and I was constructing the 'thesis' which seemed to repeat itself but didn't."

Now follows the "latent content" or "free associations."

DREAMER : (1) "I'm rheumatic and it's difficult to find a comfortable position in bed. I slept well last night, but I must have changed my position a great deal oftener than three times. I wonder why it was all 'three.' . . . It came into my mind the other day that if one divided one's life into three periods of twenty-five years each, I was just about to begin the third or last. It gave me a pang. Not that I wish to live my life over again, but because I seem to have made such a poor thing of it. If one starts wrong and gropes about rather confusedly and only begins to see the hang of the thing at the third and last chapter, it is too late to make a finished article of the whole. Still I see now that one should keep the whole in view and not try to begin again at fifty. I've been thinking I ought to make a start *now* to do the things I might have done at twenty-five if I'd had my present enlightenment—and I've dreaded it because I felt I hadn't sufficient energy or bodily strength. (2) I really am going to do some work for my aged father. It's work he would have liked to do himself but he's no longer equal to it. It necessitates my getting lodged in a certain town. A friend who was going to put me up isn't able to, so I've got to make other arrangements. I haven't been consciously anxious on this account, I don't think

there'll be any difficulty. I thought rather dejectedly the other day that I was a person 'of no fixed abode.' I wondered if it meant I should be unable to get my rations, but so far there seems to have been no difficulty. . . . I hate doing this job for Father, really; it's not at all my kind of work, but he'd be so awfully disappointed if I didn't—I'd go through with it at any cost. I see now that I've been very worried about this. I'm so afraid I shall start an illness or something which will stop me, and I keep on feeling a sore throat or something beginning. I regard these symptoms as neurotic, and nothing would induce me to give in to them. I really *want* to do it to please him, but I'm afraid I forget that motive, and my doing it becomes a battle between my will and my neurotic tendencies—and all my life has been like that, a series of 'tasks in hours of insight willed' fulfilled against the grain 'through years of gloom.' . . . My father is like my old friend X, with whom I'm so anxious to put things straight and get on to easy terms again. It's he who finds *me* trying, not the other way round. . . . There comes into my head the riddle of the man looking at a portrait of a man and saying, 'Brothers and sisters have I none, yet this man's father was my father's son.' The question is, 'What relation was the man in the portrait to the man speaking?' and most people answer off-hand 'father' but really it was a portrait of himself. It's true I have no brothers and sisters. I've been puzzled lately as to my relationship to my friend X. I've been used to looking upon him as a second father, and I believe that has been part of the difficulty. I should learn to treat him as an equal—as 'myself.' (3) I really am engaged on a thesis—this time of my own choosing, not my father's. I only hope it doesn't 'repeat itself' really, but I'm rather afraid it does. It wants a lot of working at, and I'm rather tired of it just at present—I've been going at it too hard, too exclusively."

So far the dreamer, now for the analyst's summing up and comments.

ANALYST: "You identify your friend X with your father, and this seems to have led to unhappy relations with him. The *rôle* doesn't fit him which you insist upon his playing. In the dream you correct this mistake. The portrait you gaze at—which contains the riddle of your repeated difficulty in friendship—is *not* that of your father, you say, but of yourself. Now please observe! That is what your 'conscious' says, because there is an unconscious resistance against the actual fact, that the portrait in question is that of your son. You are to find your right relation to your friend helped by your brotherly and sisterly attitude towards him (first a brother, then a sister, provides you with a bed); you are also to regard him as you would regard yourself, and finally you are to adopt in some respects a fatherly attitude towards him—so says the dream—and the difficulty of the relation will clear up in some way not yet seen. Perhaps in this infantile attitude towards your friend lies the secret of your too strenuous and dutiful attitude to life in general. It shows your father-complex, a tendency to regard every beloved object as in childhood you regarded your father, as someone better and wiser and stronger than yourself who relieved you of responsibility.

The dream represents life as development within a whole. One symbol is that of a night's rest. A night's rest is taken, not from a sense of duty (one does not have to fall back upon that), but because one wants it. If one cannot find positive pleasure in it, at least one instinctively aims at avoiding pain. Life has that aspect, it is lived not from a sense of duty, but to gain pleasure or avoid pain. That is the principal theme of the dream, showing an unconscious desire to bring that aspect of life into prominence. If you have recourse to aiming more simply at the things you like and avoiding those you dislike, there will be no

need for your perpetual conflict between the conscious ethical will, which sets you to perform a task and your unconscious resistance to performing it. You have to find a line of life where the task is set by natural desires which are normally to be depended on and are not liable to be absent through 'years of gloom.' The ethical judgment should be consulted and its approval is necessary, but in your case it should come second, not first.

Another mistake you are making which the dream points out, you have already noticed. It is absurd at fifty to try to live the arduous and full life of a young man of twenty-five. You are nearing the end and have to add a third part to complete a whole of which two-thirds are already finished and unalterable. That is your task whether you like it or not. The painfulness of the idea of the imperfection of the whole has a counterbalance. From another point of view it is the last chapter of the thesis that matters most, the final position attained in bed, the relation which you ultimately adopt towards your friend. You can learn from past failures and work out your thesis to a conclusion which shall not be merely repetition and to which no earlier part is irrelevant."

We take it that the strictly Freudian interpretation of this dream would introduce the terms "incest-complex," "sexual fixation to the father," "homo-sexual-complex" and so forth, but would not be substantially different.

The next dream is that of a woman who has worked all her life in a factory till prevented by ill-health and advanced age. It is given in her own words.

DREAM: "I dreamed some woman, I didn't know who, was walking with me up the stairs to some railway station. A thunderstorm was coming on and when the thunder came this woman took my umbrella and threw it right along the floor and left me. I said to myself, 'Well now! Fancy leaving me entirely by

myself!' I walked along the station and all at once I found myself in a kind of a boat. It was all dark and the waves of the sea were tipping the boat. There were two elderly workmen in their shirt-sleeves and I seemed to be in between them holding on to them by their shirt-sleeves and I said, 'Oh, what am I in? Am I in a steamboat?' They were so harassed they couldn't answer me. I said, 'Is it a sailing boat?' and if ever I prayed in my life I prayed then for God to have mercy on us, for I made sure we were all going to be drowned. When the thunder came it woke me up."

DREAMER: "I was going to some convalescent home, I think. They do you good, don't they? I've several times been sorry my time was up. I can't say I enjoy going. I'm nervous of a throng of people. If they found out I couldn't read I think they'd despise me dreadfully. I've never felt able to face people since my father met with his accident and died. He was a very careful man. He used to say of my mother there wasn't a harder-working woman in the world and there wasn't a bigger old fool. Father used to think we went to school but Mother used to keep us at home to help her. I'm not so frightened of thunder as some people. I don't say I *like* it. Same with Zeps. If it's God's will to go that way I shall, and if it isn't I shan't. I didn't want to get wet, I was afraid it would make my head bad. An umbrella is *such a support* when I walk. I don't know how to walk hardly without an umbrella, and I lent mine the other day and I've been sorry ever since. I've a horror of going in a boat. I went once, at a Sunday school treat as a little girl. I suppose a steamer would be safer. They were robust, strong working men pulling ropes, I should imagine. They looked like Welsh, I think, roughish but good-meaning, genuine sort of people. My grandfather was Welsh, and I always think the Welsh must be good."

A few days later this further latent content was

added. The dreamer had identified the boat of her dream with a picture in her father's three volume Bible, which she brought me to see. It was a Rembrandtesque illustration of "Christ stilling the storm" before the disciples wake him. Only two figures are clear, and their costume is suggestive of white shirt-sleeves.

DREAMER: "Father used to have to lock the book-case so that my mother shouldn't abuse these books. It grieved him to have to do it. When he was gone I saw them in a pawnbroker's window and I went and bought them out. The Bible's the best book of all, isn't it? There's a lot you can't understand in the Bible. I don't have the beautiful thoughts that other people have. Once after a meeting the speaker came up to me and said, 'I could see you were a Christian the moment I came into the room.' I said, 'No. - I don't know as I *am*.' He was *so* surprised. Our minister was satisfied with me, but I never was satisfied with myself. I was never baptised—never felt I was good enough."

ANALYST'S SUMMING UP: "The dream shows the dreamer's attitude to life as affected by her father-mother-complex. The failure in sympathy between her father and mother in childhood corresponds with a conflict between two different tendencies in herself. She has a 'big old fool' in herself of whom she is impatient, just as her father was impatient of his wife's weakness. Adopting his just but stern outlook, she despises herself because she is the sort that works hard and gives away recklessly and has nothing left for herself—she even lends her only umbrella, without which she cannot get about. She despises herself, too, for being uneducated—a thing for which she would despise no one else. The father-complex is in her case the 'authority-complex.' She has never ventured to form opinions of her own, but has adopted his. They do not, however, work, for her own would be different,

more like her mother's, so that she always has a sense of inferiority, diffidence, and feeling of dissatisfaction with herself. Her tendency in any emotional difficulty is to cling to her father, to seek safety and security by falling back upon what would have been his views of the matter. Only so can she dare to face life. The boat represents a perilous adventure, and she clings wildly to the men who symbolise her one recognised hope of safety, her father and all that he stands for. There is violent conflict of emotion between the desire to launch forth on the voyage of life, to make the journey that means progress and health, and the tendency to remain childish in clinging dependence on more self-reliant people. When we look at what the dream actually depicts as happening, we see the desire for independence prevail. She actually does climb the stairs without a manly prop and undertakes the journey alone. She actually trusts herself to the unknown deep of the unconscious, and she finds—what at first she overlooks—a saviour within herself who is able to still the waves." This part of the dream seemed to make a great impression. It was a discovery that she had a force within her unconscious mind upon which she could rely for helping her in the effort and dangers of life; that, without being any better than she was, she could come to her own rescue. The dream was followed by others emphasising this point so clearly and forcibly that it hardly seemed worth while to go into more of its associations.

We may close the subject of dreams by a comparison between dream-consciousness and the successive stages of conscious thought as it develops in the child with the aid of language. Dream-consciousness takes us back to the level now of one, now of another, of these stages.

Let us take a simple mental state and trace its development.

I. The infant in the cradle hears a loud crash. His mental state, if he could speak, might be roughly

expressed by the term "that." He does not explicitly distinguish between himself and objects, or between impressions of sight, hearing and touch. He is at the prelinguistic stage to which we sometimes revert in our dreams.

II. Later on, when he hears a crash, he tells his mother of the crash and of his fear, by some specific sound, the cry of fear which serves on each occasion when he is frightened and is a mixture of "that" with "frightened" and with "come!" for it has implicit reference to his mother as well as to himself and the crash.

His language at this stage probably has the kind of significance of the rudimentary language of the animals next to man.

III. The distinctively human stage of mind is reached with the appearance of self-consciousness and the birth of human language. He says now, "Tommy fwighten," or something like it, and he says it in order to gain his mother's help.

IV. As his brain develops, he makes distinctions between himself and objects, distinctions which were implicit from the first. Things outside himself are still, however, kinds of self, hostile or friendly. He says, "Naughty noise fwighten Tommy," or simply "Kaka," with a movement to strike the "Kaka."

V. Distinctions between self and other things lead eventually to distinctions between mind and matter. It is not till a much later stage than the last that he begins to take up a disinterested attitude towards objects of thought.

"What is that noise?" may express a highly-developed state of consciousness, only possible as the result of language, and one which has only gradually outgrown its primitive implications, even in educated minds of superior type. Many people never experience a detached objective scientific curiosity even in their waking moments.

In the dream state, we get experiences which approximate to each of these phases of development, just as second childhood approximates to a repetition of childhood. The consciousness of a developed mind reverting to a more primitive form can never be exactly like that of the undeveloped mind just reaching it in the course of growth. The commonest sort of dream, however, is probably that which corresponds more closely with ordinary waking experience.

VI. A woman who heard the first maroon announcing the Armistice on November 11th, 1918, responded with an instantaneous feeling-thought. Put into words, it ran thus :

“ *Can* the Germans be such utter idiots as to attempt a daylight raid at the eleventh hour ?—O dear, they do make it impossible to treat them calmly and humanely—*more* ruin and misery !—or can it be that the Armistice has been signed quicker than we were led to suppose was possible by the morning papers, which announced a twenty-four hours’ delay, and is this the way the authorities are announcing it—it would be quite like them—or is it only an explosion at the gas-works ? ”

All this was thought in an instant by means of other symbols in addition to words. There were two mental pictures held concurrently as alternatives, one of a squadron of hostile aeroplanes approaching London (a reminiscence of a daylight raid previously seen), the other of Foch and the German delegates standing round a table in a tent (a reminiscence of a picture in the illustrated papers of Kitchener and the Boer Generals). Hovering on the outskirts was a third picture of a large gasometer and people working in a yard outside it. These three visual images were instruments of thought and no more noticed for their own sake than would be the words used in a moment of excitement.

The ordinary dream is like any one of them or a succession of the three. The mind of the waking thinker is in an objective attitude, the whole of his mind acts

as a single instrument directed to objects of thought outside himself. The mental images used in waking thought may be changed into dream images by tuning the mind to a key in which the distinction between self and objects is obliterated and a large part of the field of consciousness is at the same time shut off.

Psycho-analytic theory comes in at this point to show why it is we dream what we do. Dream images, like waking thoughts, refer to objects. We can only represent in a dream what we ourselves have personally experienced or are able to imagine on the basis of personal experience.<sup>1</sup> Unlike waking thoughts, dream images refer to objects without any clear distinction between self and object. Dream-objects are regarded by the dreamer as the things around him are regarded by an infant of a certain age, as kinds of selves.

Like waking thoughts, dream images have their immediate origin in objective stimulus, it may be of sound or touch or light, or more often the vague and fleeting forms we see on our eyelids with closed eyes. Unlike the waking thoughts of sane people, this material given by the senses is worked up into images which express the inner desires conflicting or under-expressed which stir the depths of our emotional nature at the moment.

<sup>1</sup> Helen Keller cannot even dream of seeing and hearing though she saw and heard during her first 19 months of life. See page 33. This view disagrees with Jung's theory of primordial images, "Collected Papers," XIV., 2nd ed.



IV

UNCONSCIOUS PRIMITIVE  
TRAITS IN PRESENT-DAY  
THOUGHT



## IV

# UNCONSCIOUS PRIMITIVE TRAITS IN PRESENT-DAY THOUGHT

## CHAPTER XII

### TENDENCY TO SUBJECTIVE THINKING. SYMBOLISM

*"Our creating shaping intellect projected its own fantasies."*—

F. W. ROBERTSON.

IN the last five chapters we have looked at the way in which the unconscious mind works in dreams; in this and the two following we shall examine with equal attention some of its modes of working in our daily life, where, interpenetrating the conscious, it largely moulds our thoughts and actions, and makes us the kind of people we are. The type of thought which it is now proposed to examine has been called thinking by means of symbols,<sup>1</sup> but as all thinking is necessarily conducted by means of symbols we must look for its distinctive character elsewhere. Before going further into the matter, we will take a brief preliminary survey of the subject of symbolism in general.

A symbol is a thing taken, not for its own sake, but to stand for something else. All thought is symbolic. Whenever we think, we think about objects and

<sup>1</sup> See Jung, "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916, Chap. I.

their qualities and the relations between them. Words are symbols standing for these objects and their qualities and relations, and enabling us to think quickly. Visual images are also symbols which serve the same purpose and occur along with words. For some people a visualised diagram or image is as necessary an aid to abstract thought as is language. For example, if the object of thought be eternity, and the aim in view be to think what eternity means—what are its logical implications, then the thinker may make use of the word “eternity” to help him think, or of the image of a circle, or of a recurring decimal, or of a radiant atmosphere impinged upon by a prismatic dome.<sup>1</sup>

Concentrated thought may have various purposes, and where these are highly specialised the most useful symbol is one with fewest extraneous or irrelevant associations, one which is purely formal like the a, b, c of the alphabet, the  $a + b$  of algebra, the  $2 \times 2$  of arithmetic or the  $S - P$  of formal logic. S may be taken as a symbol of eternity by the logician who wishes to consider eternity in those of its characteristics which it has in common with every other object of thought. “A white radiance” may be taken as a symbol of eternity by the poet who wishes to express something about its relation to life—the many-coloured glass which stains it.

We see here two extreme kinds of symbols, the purely formal symbol and the poetic image. Words stand midway. They are not purely formal symbols because they have origins and histories and literary associations which cling to them. They have not, on the other hand, an indefinite boundary to the ideas associated with them in cases where they are defined and used for specialised branches of thought. There is then a consensus of opinion as to which of their associations shall be regarded as relevant, their con-

<sup>1</sup> “Life with its dome of many coloured glass  
Stains the white radiance of eternity”—SHELLEY.

notation is definite and agreed upon. Words, for each individual using them have particular associations dating back to his first acquaintance with them, since his thought and language developed inseparably, as they did in the race. The individual and private character of a man's own name is shared to a lesser extent by every word in his vocabulary.<sup>1</sup> It is their general associations which make words universal symbols, *i.e.* the common experience of the people using them.

But the meaning of a symbol may be an arbitrary one confined to a group of people to whom it is communicated.<sup>2</sup>

Thus there are many kinds of symbols, and not all have a general significance. There are arbitrary symbols incomprehensible except to those who have the clue,<sup>3</sup> and there are universal symbols which appeal to humanity because of universal associations, and there are symbols of every shade of intermediate variety.

A good example of a more or less arbitrary symbol is the cup and serpent of St. John the Divine.<sup>4</sup> These refer to an incident in the saint's legend in which a poisoned cup was offered him to drink and he exorcised the poison and dispelled it in the form of a serpent. Part of the significance of the symbol is to remind the faithful of this story and its allegorical meaning. Part of its significance is that of an identification mark, to show that this is St. John the Divine, not St. Roch or St. Sebastian or any other beardless youth. Much in

<sup>1</sup> This is seen in the word-association test, in which words are used to stimulate unconscious complexes. See "Studies in Word Association," C. G. Jung, 1918, and Dr. Constance Long's paper on "Mental Conflicts in Children," "Report of 4th Annual Conference of Educational Associations."

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* Free-masons' symbols. The famous symbol of *the fish*, which was used as an emblem of Christ because its Greek name gave the initial letters, "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour."

<sup>3</sup> One of the most widely distributed symbols in the old world is the *gamnasion*, the meaning of which is to-day unknown. See "The Migration of Symbols," Count Goblet d'Alviela, 1894. Symbols were widely borrowed from foreign nations in the course of trade.

<sup>4</sup> See Jung, "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916, p. 410. His interpretation in our view is a purely subjective one.

the same way as on Greek vases a pillar means that the scene depicted was laid in a temple, a crab by the sea shore, a single tree in a forest,<sup>1</sup> so the symbols of the saints are a picturesque mode of identifying them, and one fixed by an arbitrary convention.

The symbols used in art have shared to a great extent this arbitrary and conventional character. To understand a symbol in a picture, we must know the painter's associations with it, just as to understand the image in a dream.

The medieval painter could not allow himself to be guided by his sense of fitness in the symbols he used, since their meaning was fixed for him by the authority of tradition. Thus the lion stood for majesty and strength, the stag for purity and solitude, the goat for lust and cruelty, the horse for courage and generosity, the pelican for loving sacrifice, the unicorn for purity and strength. The forester of the day familiar with stags must have known that they were neither solitary nor pure, but when he saw the stone effigy of a stag he would recognise it as an emblem of these virtues.<sup>2</sup>

All familiar objects had their symbolic meaning assigned them, and only those appeal to us to-day the meaning of which was originally based on inherent fitness and with regard to which associations have not greatly changed. We recognise the majesty and strength of the lion (though his keeper at the Zoo might see other qualities predominating), but we could never intuitively divine the meaning of the unicorn or the pelican, for these were based on misreported facts.

We can still feel the fitness of yellow as a symbol of jealousy, since violent jealousy still makes people bilious, and green still symbolises hope, since we continue to associate it with the green of spring-time; but the Irishman and the Chinese would not understand each

<sup>1</sup> See Percy Gardner, "Grammar of Greek Art," 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Hulme, "Symbolism in Christian Art," 1892, 2nd ed., p. 176.

other's respective symbols for the earth, because they would lack each other's associations. To a Chinaman living at Tientsin and seeing perhaps six blades of grass in the year the earth is not green, nor is it yellow to the native of the Emerald Isle.

In literature and art, the symbol is chosen from a variety of causes, conscious and unconscious, and to understand a symbol we must know what associations it has for the person using it.

We may now return to our question, What is the characteristic mark of the kind of symbolism employed by the unconscious mind—that symbolism which is always cropping up wherever the unconscious takes the reins? We believe this to be its subjectivity, the result of a kind of primitive egoism whereby Man and his inner interests are felt as exclusively important, and everything else is looked upon as relative to these. This primitive egoism is seen in our dreams, and equally in the dreams of the most unselfish of people.<sup>1</sup> It is being gradually replaced by a more differentiated egoism and altruism in our conscious life, with momentous and far-reaching results to the human race. A turning-point in the history of man and in the evolution of mind was reached only a few centuries ago, when the egoistic or self-centred point of view of the unconscious mind was made conscious, and deliberately supplemented by the objective altruistic or empirical point of view, not through an increase of love, but through the development of scientific curiosity. A glance at times as recent as the Elizabethan will convince anyone of the advance made. The sort of imaginative sympathy bestowed by a Professor Haddon on the head hunters of Borneo was then inconceivable, since such things as savages, wild beasts and plants existed not in any way for their own sakes but for the instruction of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ernest Jones says that "a striking feature" of the unconscious mind is "its ruthless and absolute ego-centricity." "Psycho-analysis," 1918, p. 632.

civilised man, to illustrate eternal truths bearing upon his spiritual and emotional concerns. We are still emerging in the course of human evolution from this subjective attitude to the external world, and it still continues in our unconscious minds, influencing our habits of thought to an extent we little realise. It is worth while looking more closely at its effects on the thought of the Middle Ages, where they are very clearly marked, and at the same time tracing some of its survivals to-day where they are less easily detected, because mostly unconscious.

In the Middle Ages detached observation of nature did not exist, because its motive was lacking. Travelers' reports were accepted without further inquiry. The siren and the griffin figure in catalogues of animals as late as 1675.<sup>1</sup> So little were men's powers of observation trained that the colours of the rainbow were said to be red, blue and green by Bartholomew, writing in 1397,<sup>2</sup> and for five hundred years after, and this because it was felt to be fitting that the colours of the rainbow should be those symbolic of fire, water and earth, the sun, the rain and the earth.

Not only the facts of Nature, but the recorded facts of history were treated primarily as illustrations of eternal truths. A deliberately allegorical and symbolic interpretation was given to history, secular as well as religious. Whether an event ever actually happened, like the question whether a certain kind of animal ever really lived, was "off the point," a question of minor or pedantic interest. The point was, What did these events or creatures real or imaginary symbolise? The origin and rise of the nation must be one which symbolised its greatness; the heroic race, like the hero, must have a miraculous or striking birth, must be the offspring of a god or goddess or at least descended from the Missing Tribes. Even when men wrote history, with

<sup>1</sup> "Shakespeare's England," 1916, Vol. I., p. 495.

<sup>2</sup> "De Proprietatibus Rerum."

the acknowledged purpose of recording how things really happened, they wrote it at the same time with the unconscious purpose of showing how great and good they were, how diabolical and base their enemies. The facts that seemed fitting were recorded, those that seemed unfitting were left out or altered. To this day the popular History of England recounts how St. Augustine was the first to introduce Christianity. Space will be found to record Gregory's puns about Angles and angels, but none for the doings of the picturesque Irish missionaries who enlightened our heathendom. For some reason or other, the unconscious sees to it that these are repressed.

A few years ago Mrs. J. R. Green began to observe the facts—in this case to search the records—of the English conquest of Ireland,<sup>1</sup> and she found that a long line of historians (herself and her husband included), had copied from one another an account of the condition of Ireland at the time of its conquest as grotesquely untrue as the imagined colours of the rainbow. The facts were seen as they were desired to be. "Eyes and ears," said Heraclitus, "are bad witnesses to men who have not an understanding heart."

Let us now glance at the symbolising tendency in the primitive which in some ways is no further removed from our own than that of the medieval historian.

When something impresses primitive man, and arouses any strong interest or emotion, he will, as it were, seize upon external objects and wrest them so as to represent his impression symbolically, and gain the satisfaction of expression, not in action, but in contemplation.

"Nothing," says Sir Alfred Lyall, "impresses the primitive or the uncultivated mind like human personality or character,"<sup>2</sup> and history teems with heroes—actual men turned into symbols. In modern India men are still worshipped as gods. "The god

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. J. R. Green, "The Making of Ireland and its Undoing," 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Lyall, "Asiatic Studies," 1899, Vol. I., p. 49.

'Dulha Deo,' a boy-bridegroom, died in the midst of his own marriage procession," an "affecting incident," says Lyall, which at once made him the symbol of human misfortune. "Admiration, surprise, pity, terror," all cause worship.<sup>1</sup> A man "renowned for his austerity or his afflictions" dies. "In the course of a very few years the recollection of the man's personality becomes misty, his origin grows mysterious (because these things do not interest us on their own merits), his career takes a legendary hue, his birth and death were both supernatural," and in the end the man was a god, one of the incarnations of Vishnu or Siva.<sup>2</sup>

General Nicholson, who was killed at the storming of Delhi, 1857, was the unwilling object of the worship of a sect during his lifetime, and since his death has been worshipped as Nikkul Seyn.<sup>3</sup> He was a man to captivate the imagination, kind, stern, fearless and of magnificent physique.

Captain Pole, because he died mortally wounded in a forest, met with a similar fate.<sup>4</sup> Garibaldi was worshipped as divine by the Sicilians, whom he freed from their oppressors in 1860.<sup>5</sup>

If we have outgrown the "natural propensity to adore curious, terrible or beneficent things" as full-blown gods, we keep the unconscious tendency to regard them as symbols, to find in their contemplation the means of expressing our ever-ready wonder, terror or gratitude. For one Englishman who is interested in the actual character of the Kaiser there are many to whom he serves as a symbol expressive of their own unconscious capacities for evil. In their mental picture he is surrounded by a glamour of fear and hatred, such as properly belongs to no human being but only to some fantasy of the unconscious. To many an English-

<sup>1</sup> Lyall, "Asiatic Studies," 1899, Vol. I., pp. 24-26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 25, and Vol. II., p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 301.

<sup>5</sup> "Garibaldi and the Thousand," G. M. Trevelyan, 1909, pp. 268-269 and 306-307.

man the figures of Drake, Napoleon, Nelson and Charles I. have a purely symbolical significance. Charles I., indeed, continues to focus the unconsciously repressed emotions of Englishmen, and in this he is aided by his white collar, but not by his individual character. He was executed by his own subjects, and consequently he symbolises the cruel despot or the gentle martyr, according to our conscious view of the question, and still more according to our unconscious attitude towards the tyrant-rebel-complex.<sup>1</sup> If we have strong feelings on the subject *primâ facie*, we shall not be anxious to learn the facts about the deeds and character of Charles Stuart the man, except in so far as they harmonise with our feelings. If facts and feelings are discordant, we shall have a tendency to ignore facts or to distort them into a shape from whence harmony may be wrung. Charles is wanted by us as a symbol, not as a real character. We are more eager to express hatred of tyranny or admiration of loyalty than we are curious to learn what this man thought, felt and did.

It is plain that this unconscious tendency to regard real people as symbols for expressing poetic truths still leads to injustice in the historical verdict on character as well as to inaccuracy in recording events.

But it is not only in history that its results are unjust. The primitive unconscious tendency in our own uncultivated minds to this kind of egoistic symbolism distorts all we see and experience. Everything that interests us is apt to be changed a little from its actual form in order the better to express our own under-expressed passions and emotions, or to symbolise the curious, the terrible or the beneficent. Facts are changed, too, in order to simplify them, because while our desires are strong our brains are weak; facts are never simple, but infinitely complex; we cannot grasp them easily with their actual intricacies and reservations, and we are not content to leave them alone, so we see them

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. V., p. 57.

falsely to suit our mental capacities ; in short, we tend only to see the obvious, and that which pleases our passions or fits in with our preconceived theories.

For example, we are inclined to see the poor not as they are but rather as part of a picture which symbolises our own benevolence, especially our impulsive desire to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and succour the orphan. Some people would keep the poor always hungry, and substitute a uniform for a child's own clothes, and turn children into orphans, though they have mothers still living, so as to satisfy these benevolent instincts, much as a child, because it loves its cat, wishes to be perpetually succouring it. Similarly, children to us are symbols of innocence, and because our own sexuality is associated with sense of guilt, to us innocence implies a pre-sexual state of mind. Hence, no doubt, doctors and educators have been slow to observe the facts of infant sexuality which Freud has brought to our reluctant notice, though they were there all the time. In criminals we still see symbols of wickedness, in spite of all that humanitarians and psychologists have urged, though we no longer beat or chain the devil in the insane. In the aged we see symbols of helplessness and the peaceful calm of even-tide, so we crowd our old people into pretty almshouses and the wards of workhouses, although they proverbially hate each other's company and dislike having things done for them so long as they can fend for themselves. When a man dons a soldier's uniform in war time we see in him a symbol of heroic valour, of noble self-devotion ; he is our saviour, and we condone his gross offences ; but history even to-day warns us that once the danger is past, or his ability to protect us, we are apt to see him rather as a symbolic means of expressing our own pity, a "gallant cripple," or, worse still, as a symbol of dissoluteness, and in either case, to treat him as less than human. So with any striking situation in real life. We regard it egoistically, subjectively, sym-

bolically, in accordance with the promptings of the unconscious mind.

To a jury of Englishmen, a charming woman symbolises frail and gentle woman appealing to strong man for protection; the jealous husband who shoots his wife's lover symbolises honour and constant love. Those striking characteristics are on the surface. We do not explore for others less obvious, because these that we see satisfy systems of repressed or under-expressed emotion in the unconscious which eagerly fasten on such a means of symbolic expression. Every juryman feels a nobler and a better man as he vindicates his own admiration of male honour, his own chivalry towards frail and lovely woman, however erring.

We unconsciously project the desires and emotions of our own souls on to external objects. Without realising it, we do in fact regard these objects as symbols. They express us to ourselves, and since what appeals to one man will appeal to others of like nature, the expression is general within a group. It would be all very well if the objects we insist upon regarding as symbols were not, as Shylock asseverated, flesh and blood like ourselves, complicated human beings with great need of human sympathy and understanding, not devils or angels or isolated moods or puppets in striking situations. As it is, this unconscious proneness to symbolise, limits and destroys human sympathy. A fellow-being asks for bread and we give him a stone, though it may be a diamond. He needs love and appreciation of his good qualities, mercy and tolerance towards his defects, and above all help to achieve his heart's desires, and we do not even begin to understand him, to look at him objectively. We use him as material for the weaving of our own subjective fantasies, as an illustration of our intuitive convictions, as a symbol, and not as a fact. Perhaps half the injustice and cruelty in the world arise from this unconscious tendency to subjective symbolism.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SYMBOLISM IN ART AND LITERATURE

*"The eye is the lamp of the body ; so, if your eye be generous, the whole of your body will be illumined, but if your eye is selfish, the whole of your body will be darkened."*

—ST. MATTHEW, vi. 22 (trans. Moffatt).

IN the last chapter we have seen that primitive intellectual egoism leads man to think subjectively of external objects, using them as symbols whereby to express his internal emotions and convictions, with little regard to their appropriateness in fact.

Just as any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, so, for example, any royal personage will serve to express our feeling of the dignity or importance of ourselves and our bourgeois activities ; any official enemy, religious, political or racial (provided he have a not unsuitable face), will aptly symbolise the evil in ourselves that we hate and fear.

The opposite, or objective, mode of thought we have seen to be a late development of the human mind, an evolution of scientific curiosity, implying a new attitude to the external world, a shifting of emphasis from self to object. In the ancient and medieval worlds, as well as in the primitive, the phenomena of nature were only observed closely for some directly utilitarian purpose, such as the search for gold or the desire to avoid personal danger. Such things as stones and stars had no interest for man on their own account, their interest was either utilitarian or allegorical.

An example may help to make clear the distinction that we have in view between the ancient mind and the modern. Let us suppose that a few years ago a certain recluse had never heard of aeroplanes and that one flew into his ken. His interest would be largely objective. "What is it?" he would ask, and would rapidly compare it with birds, balloons and the flying reptiles of the blue Lias. His theory as to what it was would be held lightly, and continually modified with the successive reports of observation. Compare the state of mind of a primitive who sees a ship for the first time. He could no more regard it objectively, with a measure of detached disinterested curiosity, than could a small child. By both of them the fact of the ship is taken for granted, not questioned. The primitive would see it immediately as a something powerful, able to do good or harm to himself or his tribe. If his tribe were still absorbed in the struggle for existence his thought might be: "This god will protect, or destroy. I will propitiate."

The attitude of mind of the ancient or medieval dweller in cities would not be essentially different. He might think, "This sign from God is to show his power, or our guilt. It portends disaster."

The primitive in our unconscious minds constantly tends to make us dispense with accurate observation and look upon any striking object as a symbol of some subjective concern.

The symbolical expression of an emotion may be universalised into an eternal truth, and consequently this kind of subjective self-centred symbolism, characteristic of the unconscious mind, has its proper sphere in art and religion. There the same thing is done, but done on purpose. When Blake, the artist, depicts a worm, he has no interest in the structure or habits of a worm, he delineates something sufficiently like a real worm to be recognised with the help of a label, and uses it as a symbol standing for childish innocence.

So when he draws a youth with limbs twice their normal length, it is not the human form with which he is concerned, but the emotion of "aspiration," and this emotion he succeeds in conveying to others by means of a figure with an impossible anatomy.

No harm comes of this kind of symbolising so long as the artist knows what he is doing and distinguishes between the handling of objects as they are and the handling of objects as they are not in order to express universal emotions or eternal truths as they are. To be sure of keeping the distinction, the artist must bring his unconscious tendencies into consciousness. This the primitive cannot do, for he has not yet evolved the distinction in question; he does not yet see a difference between myth and fact, between symbol and thing symbolised, between the object as it really is and the object regarded as an expression of a subjective truth. But when once the distinction has been grasped in the history of human thought, the capacity for making it clear can be brought out by education in the individual mind, and it must be so brought out if we would think truly and along the line of advancing knowledge.

Myth gains a new significance when we learn to appreciate its symbolical spiritual truth and its æsthetic beauty, science a new dignity and impetus when we separate it from myth and realise that it exists on its own merits. In their separate spheres poetic and historic truth adorn and illustrate each other, whilst religion gives and receives fresh meaning with every newly-observed fact of human life. Genesis regarded as myth is valued for its poetical and ethical truth; in pursuing the actual course of history we observe and ascertain "the ways of God." Only through learning what they actually are can we learn how they justify themselves to man. We are on all sides the gainers by the development of symbolic and scientific thought, each in its own kind.

Subjective symbolism is apt to intrude beyond its province, not because man is too poetical and religious, but because he has a constant tendency to relapse into primitive modes of thought, to let his unconscious get control of his conscious mind in order to save himself the effort of clear thinking. With our unconscious minds, as in dreams, we think loosely and subjectively, failing to distinguish categories.

Primitive modes of feeling as well as thinking linger in the unconscious. Just as unconscious thought is loose and blurred, so unconscious feeling, though spontaneous and vivid, is blunt, too blunt and self-centred for the individual to concern himself whether the symbol employed be in fact appropriate or not, so long as its employment gives immediate emotional gratification. In our unconscious minds, like the primitive, we are only able to take a vivid interest in ourselves and our own emotions.

These primitive tendencies show themselves in literature and art, where, reacting upon our other activities, they are at once a symptom and a cause of regression. We will now look more closely into the ways in which they betray themselves, and first we will look at the part played by unconscious symbolism in popular art. The most popular art is that which appeals to the under-expressed emotions of the majority, and it is, as a rule, either the best or the worst. The populace has this in common with the man of outstanding genius, that it keeps a sense of proportion with regard to human emotions. Popular art may be of any race or epoch. What is claimed to be the most popular poem in the world was written at least 2,000 years ago, and Raphael's Sistine Madonna could never be out of date.<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence that human nature has intrinsically altered emotionally since man left records

<sup>1</sup> The XXIII. psalm (dated at latest 130 B.C.). See C. G. Montefiore, "The Bible for Home Reading," 1900, Part II., p. 14. For its popularity see "Psalms in Human Life," R. E. Prothero, 1904.

of his self-conscious thought and feeling, and much that it has not. The deepest primitive emotions are those of every race and time, so far as we can judge. With the mass of people, love of good, hatred of evil, rebellion against tyranny, fear of anarchy, are amongst the motives that appeal most forcibly; while such emotions as jealousy, ambition, gaiety and a rude sense of fun are so strong as to be habitually under-expressed and to lead men to seize eagerly upon any symbolical mode of expressing them.

The primitive blurring over of the distinction between idea and fact helps us to express our emotions symbolically and dramatically as mere passive spectators. To watch a contest is to take part in it, whether in the dream or on the football field.

Primitive passions are the themes of the world's greatest literature, as well as of the "penny dreadfuls," "shilling shockers," music halls and "movies." Shakespeare is not "caviare to the general" as is Henry James or George Meredith. He deals with themes which interest them and expresses just those emotions which habitually crave expression, while the beauty of his language stirs their unconscious love of poetry. He is popular because he treats of universal and primitive emotions, but he is popular in spite of the anachronism and consequent obscurity of the symbols whereby he represents them. We can all understand self-torturing jealousy, and it moves us; but when it is symbolised by a negro general married to a white girl we are puzzled by conflicting associations.

The symbols of the popular novel are more easily grasped. Character and situation are alike unconsciously regarded symbolically. We do not require our fiction to be like real life. We do not want Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch to be like any real working woman. Rather we are inclined to demand of real working women that they should be like Mrs. Wiggs, the same blend of independence and servile snobbery;

we require from them the same unbounded gratitude for our generosity and unlimited blindness to our selfishness. She panders to our unconscious longing to be pleased with ourselves as prosperous and generous, and at the same time to express our pity for less fortunate people. It "does us good" to read about her, for in the unconscious we need a testimonial to our own benevolence, and an assurance that we are not really, as we fear, murdering Mrs. Wiggs's little boy.

Just so it "does us good," if we are habitually prudish, to kick over the restraints of fear, and joke about indecencies in the innuendoes of the music halls. But if we give our childish impulse to exhibitionism some satisfaction in everyday life appropriate to our stage of culture, or have outgrown it altogether in the course of our development, then the funny man of the halls will bore us. If, on the other hand, he irritates us or excites our wrath, we betray thereby our own repression. He stimulates something in ourselves that craves expression but is repressed into the unconscious. It is better to be crude than to be repressed, because it represents an attitude more open to enlightenment.

In the novel, the situations as well as the characters are unintentionally symbolic. It does not disturb the thousands who weep over the strong situation in "East Lynne" that it is quite an impossible one, that a woman could not come back to her own home and be governess to her own children without her husband and the servants recognising her. What is wanted is not "real life," but the thrill of conflicting emotions as we identify ourselves unconsciously with the weak and erring wife whom the stern, pure husband refuses to kiss on her death-bed. We feel how hard life is, how cold and cruel is goodness, and yet how good. This is just one of the things we are always feeling and always wanting to express. "East Lynne" can no longer express it for people whose training has advanced beyond the undifferentiated symbolic stage, for they

cannot fail to compare things as they are represented with things as they are; consequently, they demand historic as well as poetic truth in their fiction. Cultivated minds may find in Browning's "Ring and the Book" a more satisfying expression of the same theme.

If we could clearly distinguish between the objective and subjective element in thought, no harm would result from the objective falsity of a literary symbol; Mrs. Wiggs would please us then as do the siren and the cherub, beings known to belong to the realm of fantasy. But in point of fact our symbolism is usually unconscious, and we are inclined to assume that if a thing pleases us emotionally it is objectively true. Consequently, the symbol which does not correspond with historic or objective truth has pernicious consequences in thought and action, for it limits sympathy and feeds false sentiment. We are none the worse for being entertained by fairies and giants, angels and demons, but it does us harm to be entertained by impossible characters in impossible situations providing us food for passing emotions, because we are already only too inclined to look upon life as holding up the mirror to fiction, to regard the world of external objects as existing for the purpose of reflecting our own inner lives. That way lies repression, relapse into mental barbarism with its emotional self-centredness, its intellectual blurring over of distinctions.

The above considerations apply to the whole sphere of art, to every creation of man that aims at the expression of emotion.

In every branch of art the primary emotion aroused is the specific one of a "sense of beauty," whether of colour, sound or form. An appeal is made to the feeling for beauty through the senses. But such an appeal can only be made by means of some definite object presented to the senses, and such an object, however abstract we try to make it, inevitably has associations

and arouses other emotions along with the purely æsthetic. That is why, for instance, we could never take a purely sensuous delight in a picture of blood, beautiful though the colour might be. Whether we will or no, the vehicle by which the feeling for beauty is aroused is at the same time a symbol of other human emotions and interests. The current definitions of art imply this. If art be "nature seen through a temperament," the temperament is human and therefore emotional. If it be "significant form," the form is significant to man, an emotional being to whom nothing has significance that does not stir his emotions.

The choice of a symbol where the artist works spontaneously is the work of the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind suggests a subject or creates a design in order to give expression to its own emotions, and in so doing it necessarily presents one that appeals to men of similar temperament, that conveys a universal as well as a particular truth. This is so whether the artist be consciously repeating a formula, as does the eikon-maker, or directly imitating Nature, as Millais was fond of doing, or subliming Nature and re-presenting her, with Turner, or deliberately portraying forms intended to symbolise emotion, with Watts, or just painting whatever comes to him from the unconscious, with the ultra-modernist, or presenting incidents and anecdotes with no other motive than to tickle the popular taste and bring in the dollars, as does the painter of Christmas "pot-boilers."

In every case there is an element of unconscious selection. An artist cannot paint a thing in which he has no interest, and his interest is due to its being an expression of his own under-expressed emotions of these impulses and cravings which have not reached the "point of satiety." All art is, to this extent, subjectively symbolic. It differs in the nature of the emotions it expresses and the symbols it chooses whereby to express them. If Sir L. Alma Tadema painted marble and

Romans *ad nauseam*, it was not merely because pictures on this theme brought him in a steady income; it was because he enjoyed painting marble; to him, as to the British public, marble palaces with noble Romans in them were symbolic of those regions of the soul where we are relieved of sordid cares and petty scruples, where all is beauty, ease and lofty dignity, where men are self-indulgent and at the same time marble is cold and pure. Man attempts a solution of the "eternal conflict" between flesh and spirit by the dream that he "dwells in marble halls," a wish fulfilment that passion shall have no sordid side, that the desires of the flesh shall be magnificent and beautiful. To sophisticated people, however, it is "not the coat that makes the gentleman," so that marble halls and ancient Romans are no longer satisfying symbols; they do not express the idea intended because we know too much about them and inappropriate associations crowd in. Some people may find the same idea more convincingly conveyed in Watts's "Love and Life."

The unconscious element in art seems to be one of the factors which make it interesting, whether for the artist himself or for the spectator. Pictures, like poems, are always interesting when the symbols are chosen by the unconscious of the artist at the dictation of a strong emotion and appeal to the unconscious emotions of the spectator.

Symbols need not be vague. To Blake it came natural to choose the human figure and to depict his symbols with firm, clear outline. What he felt he felt passionately, and because of his own confused repressions he had a neurotic fear and hatred of vagueness and confusion. There were many things he failed to see, but nothing of which he got an idea that he was content to leave vague. He must clear it up. His pictures are both suggestive and logical, with the relations between the parts purposely defined and every one of them significant. Where he has nothing to say he

shows it in his engravings by ugly and meaningless spaces filled in with cross hatching.

Ultra-modern artists<sup>1</sup> also seem to speak out of the unconscious. Like all artists, they are forced by the limitations of their art to define precisely the relations between the various parts of their designs, but these relations would seem to have no significance unless it be an inverted significance of the deliberate avoidance of conventional formulæ. If we understand them aright, they aim at conveying ideas after the manner of rocks and clouds, and of the drawings of children, independently of precise outline.

The anecdotal picture has incurred the contempt of critics, but it may be just as spontaneous an expression of emotion as any other kind of theme. One man may express an individual emotion by a group of figures which tells a story, and the group will appeal to others who need to express a similar emotion and whose minds have similar backgrounds of associated ideas.

Pictures are least interesting where the unconscious mind of painter and spectator contributes least, as when an uncongenial sitter is painted to order. Where the unconscious of the artist is stirred, even Court ceremonies can be made interesting, as Orchardson has shown. The work of the artist who consciously and deliberately descends to the obvious in order to appeal to the unconscious of the multitude is uninteresting to himself and to those like-minded with himself, but it may be inspiring to others for whom it is intended, and may stimulate and help to develop their latent love of beauty, just as the joke made drearily "to order" may arouse genuine mirth in its hearers.

The appeal of the obvious symbol has two distinct origins; it may show that feeling is deficient or merely that it is uncultivated. A strong and striking appeal is needed to stimulate deficient feeling, the subtle escapes observation. The eighteenth century millowners and

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 6.

employers of children chimney-sweeps were somewhat hard-hearted and insensible to the charm and pathos of childhood; to rouse their sympathetic emotions, the child depicted by a Sir Joshua Reynolds had to be strikingly pretty and well-groomed and put in surroundings which showed its good breeding, or at least its respect for the well-bred. Nowadays, we require it to be laid upon a bed of sickness or dressed in "fancy costume."

On the other hand, the feeling of those who love the obvious may not be deficient, but merely uncultivated. A tender-hearted lover of children may find her love fitly expressed by the ordinary Christmas Supplement picture, because her associations are few and simple and her love of children so abundant that it is habitually under-expressed and readily fastens upon any symbol. A man of more cultivated mind is sensitive to lack of feeling in the artist, and as his associations are many and complex, those that are appropriate may be overwhelmed by others. He may be second to none in his appreciation of the beauty and pathos of childhood, but if this is fully expressed in his daily life it does not readily respond to the too obvious symbol.

Lack of feeling is evident wherever the obvious is shunned, where it makes no appeal to us, so that we cannot even for a moment see it sympathetically with the eyes of its admirer, the ordinary Philistine. If our feeling is small in capacity and at the same time highly cultivated, we are apt to miss it at the source while we admire the fineness and subtlety of its remoter branches. One kind of modern novel depicts heroes and heroines who are so lacking in feeling that their chief interest in life is the intellectual criticism of their own and each others'.

The lack of sympathy between the "classes" and the "masses" is partly due to the one group being over-refined, the other under-cultivated. There are two marked notes in typically modern art and literature:

fear of our own primitive crudeness on the one hand, and a defiant and aggressive expression of it on the other. Both sound how faint and fading an echo of the old-world battles between the flesh and the devil, between heroes and dragons, saints and demons ! Modern novelists and poets portray emotions which are too anæmic to live of their own vitality. Their characters lash their lusts to the point of expression spurred on by the hope of shocking ; or they treat them as a problem for the intellect, a question of taste, and within the narrow limits of a particular code of æsthetic and ethical convention they allow their thought to play upon them. Such books are "Greek" to the ordinary working-class man or woman. They depict the problems of the over-cultivated who have not lived, have not allowed themselves to feel, because they are afraid of their feelings. Even where they imagine themselves indulging in crude feeling, they actually repress it into the unconscious, where it vitiates their judgment and works havoc with their inner lives. They make a cult of simplicity, but they do not let themselves be simple.

Probably every human being needs to find an outlet for his emotion through his own and other people's art, whether music, poetry or the plastic arts, if he is to avoid the pitfall of repression. Hence all art is good which is enjoyed in a normal way, even if it be enjoyed only by the artist who produces it, but that art is best which re-enforces the main current of progress of its time ; whether it be the art of a Michael Angelo, whose symbols appeal to humanity and express eternal truths, of a Cimabué tentatively and gently removing the barriers imposed by religious tradition, of a Paolo Ucello enraptured with the possibilities of perspective (the charm of which to him lay in its being a new symbol), or of the many courageous souls who have revolted in turn against the formalism of a passing generation.

There is no danger to art in subjective symbolism

in itself which has here entered into its kingdom, but there is danger in the tendency to allow it to operate unconsciously, to relapse into the primitive confusion between the thing regarded from its own point of view and the thing regarded from our point of view, that is, as an expression of our emotion. We see both Blake and the present-day neo-artist each in his way falling into this error. Blake is justified in representing childish innocence by a worm, but he errs in laying down a rule on the matter, and the symbolic code of his prophetic books is tedious to anyone who is more inclined to see in the worm a symbol of hoary guilt.

The horizontal is justly depicted by Gaudier-Brzeska as symbolic of lust of war, but he lapses into formalism when he assigns this as its absolute meaning and seeks to justify his dictum by further dicta about the history of mankind.<sup>1</sup> To another artist the horizontal may symbolise peace and repose. In each of these cases values are put on the objects used as symbols which properly belong only to the emotions symbolised.

A lesser pitfall of symbolism which is yet frequent enough comes from a misunderstanding of what unconscious fantasies subjectively represent in any particular case. A poet or painter under the influence of sexual repression may produce grotesque or hideous forms which he himself does not consciously understand. They are an unconscious expression of his half-strangled sexual cravings. They have a kind of fascination for him and for kindred minds with similar repressions. They are regarded by some as magical, by others as morbid. The magical charm of the ugly or repulsive which is based on sexual repression does not survive the education of the unconscious; the symbol is then seen to represent unconscious sexuality unintentionally exposed and not fear or horror deliberately expressed. Leonardo, as we have noticed,<sup>2</sup> turned his critical faculties on to

<sup>1</sup> See Ezra Pound's "Mémoire of Gaudier-Brzeska."

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, Chap. I., p. 6.

the material furnished by his unconscious, and some of his drawings are of grotesque and horrible forms consciously intended to arouse feelings of rude fun or of horror.

The education of the unconscious increases its effectiveness in art and reveals the artist latent in every individual; it is only when uneducated and misunderstood that the unconscious is a source of danger. All those cramping and soul-deadening influences which we have ascribed to an unconscious abuse of symbolism may be either fostered or combated by a nation's art, for, as the artist has always felt, his function is to teach; whether he will or no he unconsciously helps or hinders human progress. He hinders it when his symbols are stereotyped, or out of harmony with the associations of sensitive minds, for then he encourages us not to think at all, or to feel along a scale of false values; he makes us unprogressive and hard-hearted. He helps progress when his symbols are new and suggestive, or in harmony with the feelings of sensitive minds, for then he stimulates thought and promotes true sentiment; he makes us think freely and feel truly,—the two main conditions of human progress.

## CHAPTER XIV

### TENDENCY TO CONFUSE CATEGORIES. ANIMISM AND MAGIC

*"To this day the outlying mass of savagery and semi-civilisation still threatens us, not with the open conquest which has haunted perverted imaginations, but with the far subtler dangers of internal corruption."*—L. T. HOBHOUSE.

IN the last two chapters we examined the tendency of the unconscious mind to symbolise, and to do so without any clear distinction between the thing used as a symbol and the thing for which it stands. But the categories of symbol and fact are not the only categories confused in the unconscious mind, and we will now glance at a few similar confusions with their corresponding well-known traits in primitive thought. Once again we will go to the anthropologists for light upon the background of our own minds, and try with their help to realise more intimately the way in which primitive man sees the world around him, for it is the way in which we ourselves habitually tend to see it, whenever we let our unconscious rule.

We do this in the sphere of reason far more often than is generally recognised, even by psycho-analysts. Indeed, a study of unconscious tendencies to fallacious reasoning, if applied to some writers of the psycho-analytic school of thought, might leave them "hoist with their own petard." They have not yet turned their attention to logical fallacy as the character-

istically unconscious activity which it undoubtedly is. If a man were to multiply two by two and repeatedly affirm the result to be five, every psycho-analyst would see in this mistake evidence of an unconscious "complex" causing resistance which prevented him from getting the correct result. But a logical fallacy, however intricate, is of a precisely similar character. It is a mistake which *if once seen* cannot be consciously repeated; and we are prevented from seeing it by unconscious bias, the result either of a repression or of that want of differentiation that belongs to the uncultivated primitive mind. As has been pointed out by their critics, "begging the question" is a favourite fallacy of psycho-analytic writers. They start with the assumption that the explanation of an observed phenomenon of behaviour is sexual, and they fail to base their assumption on truths independent of itself.<sup>1</sup> A reference to almost any of their reviews will furnish evidence of this.

To return to the mind of the primitive in the search for our own unconscious tendencies. With primitive man there is *no definite limit to the possible*. We support our own unconscious credulity as did Hamlet :

"There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Like Hamlet, we are inclined to believe in the existence of whatever we greatly desire or dread, but only if we conceive it, as he conceived of ghosts, as being intrinsically possible. What is not possible is beyond the scope of our desire or fear. To-day we are capable of "observing" the troops of an allied nation pour through our ports at a moment of national need. The soldier sent into captivity in a far country, among strangers, disarmed and guarded by his captors, sometimes assumed the form, in our eyes, of a sinister and dangerous

<sup>1</sup> See *Proceedings of Psychical Research Society*, July, 1918. Article by Miss A. Johnson, p. 67.

enemy. We no longer witness heavenly portents ushering in calamity or triumph, nor do we see witches surrounded by their imps,<sup>1</sup> as did our forefathers of a few centuries back. To the primitive who had not yet observed facts dispassionately or evolved the idea of natural law, all that was imaginable was also credible.<sup>2</sup> The dead might be brought back to life.<sup>3</sup> Things turned into each other, as they still do in our dreams. "In primitive fancy a sorcerer turns into a dragon, a mouse, a stone and a butterfly without the smallest difficulty."<sup>4</sup>

The thing which impresses the primitive mind most of all is power or "*mana*," and though this is felt to exist pre-eminently in a powerful personality, yet it also exists to a certain degree in every object which has a quasi-personality, and it *can pass from one object to another*.<sup>5</sup>

If a thing belong to a powerful man or god it will have some of his power. Uzzah is struck dead when he touches the ark, though his intention was innocent.<sup>6</sup>

This mode of thought lingers on in the mascot and in the "charm" of to-day. We read in an official publication of the Church of Rome of the year 1918 that "whatever the Church blesses has a salutary effect on those who use it with faith and piety" and that medals, amongst other things, convey this salutary effect when blessed by the priest.<sup>7</sup>

However, "any medals which bear an image of the

<sup>1</sup> W. Notestein, "A History of Witchcraft in England, 1558-1718." Oxford University Press, 1911, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> In the year of Edward VII.'s coronation a story was widely believed in Whitechapel that a girl lay in the London Hospital awaiting the King's permission to "end her misery," who in smelling a rose, had sniffed an insect into her brain whence it could not be dislodged.

<sup>3</sup> Budge, "Egyptian Magic," 1899, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Morals in Evolution," 1906, Vol. II., p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. W. R. Halliday, "Greek Divination," 1913, Chap. II., and Frazer, "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., Vol. I., p. 339. Frazer says: "This supernatural power supplies, as it were, the physical basis of magic."

<sup>6</sup> 2 Sam., VI., see L. T. Hobhouse, "Morals in Evolution," 1906, Vol. II., p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Medals of this kind may be had from R. and T. Washbourne, Ltd., 1, Paternoster Row.

Sacred Heart alone without the Body of Our Lord are useless for gaining the indulgences," *i.e.* do not convey the salutary effect. The virtue of the priests' blessing is lost without the correct observance of the formula. Here we see the "tendency of formalism to supersede mana."<sup>1</sup>

When formalism is developed, symbolical acts alone without the aid of a powerful personality produce the salutary effect. Fasting may be noticed as one instance among many. An evil woman was on her way to her lemmann when she fell into a well twenty fathoms deep. Because she had fasted on the Friday and Saturday she was miraculously saved, the water turning into hard ground. So Geoffroy the knight tells his daughters in 1371,<sup>2</sup> and he draws the moral that it is a blessed thing to fast, and the more harm it does the faster, the more is the merit. In 1918 we read in a "Simple Confession Book" distributed by the Church that "going to communion after breaking the fast" is as an instance of "mortal" or deadly sin, explained later as a sin which unconfessed and unabsolved brings the sinner everlasting bodily torment.<sup>3</sup>

The ritual of baptism is another symbolic act, recognised as having its counterpart in primitive initiation ceremonies.<sup>4</sup> Nothing would induce some modern Esquimaux, once acquainted with its efficacy, to omit the ceremony,<sup>5</sup> but the contemporary English parent has reached a higher phase of civilisation and is sceptical, for we read the complaint that "there are mothers who keep their children for days and weeks without baptism, though they know that if it dies without the sacrament it will never see God."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Halliday, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> T. Wright, "The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry," revised ed., 1906, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> London Catholic Truth Society, D 253.

<sup>4</sup> See Newton Marshall, "Conversion."

<sup>5</sup> Stefansson, "My Life with the Eskimo," 1913.

<sup>6</sup> London Catholic Truth Society, Do 11, p. 32. Many who have reached a high phase of civilisation have their children baptised for

Primitive man *does not distinguish between objective and subjective*, between matter and mind. The dream and hallucination are real to him, as are also the things he imagines because he desires or dreads them—the thoughts that are fathered by wishes and fears. Of course, this leads to errors, as when one dreams of an enemy's death and next day finds him alive ; accordingly, one of his early distinctions is between different degrees of reality. The first test of the degree of reality which a thing possesses is to "put it to the touch." The sense of touch alone is as subject to illusion as any other, but in conjunction with sight it is infallible. "Thus a bird is real, the wind and a dream-bird are not real, but they have a *kind of reality*, that of the "super-sensuous world."<sup>1</sup>

Only material (and hence tangible) things are real, but then all things are material to a greater or less degree.

Later in man's history he came to recognise one aspect of the distinction between subjective and objective, namely, that between mind and body, and as this distinction came prominently into view there came along with it a sense of the superior value of mind. He then rebelled against the crude notion that the only things of importance were those which could be touched and handled ; the most important things of all, the things pertaining to the mind and soul, were precisely those which were not tangible. But though he could now distinguish between what was important to him and what he could touch with his hands, he could not yet distinguish between subjective and objective reality, between what was real in the realm of mind and what was real in the realm of matter. To civilised man an idea about a rock is real and the rock is real, but when man first came to see that the idea of the rock was even

other reasons and without any belief in the "mana" or "salutary effect" thus obtained.

<sup>1</sup> Miss J. E. Harrison, "Alpha and Omega," 1915, p. 154.

more important to him than the rock, he denied reality to the rock ; as he had formerly over-valued it, so now he depreciated it—the rock was not real. It was held by the Neo-Platonists that the spirit alone was real and good, while the body and all material things were not real, they were no-thing and evil. Thus subject and object were partly distinguished as mind (or spirit) and matter, but they were not yet sufficiently discriminated to recognise that one is as real as the other, but that each has reality of a specific kind.<sup>1</sup> A confusion was shown between the real and the good along with a violent reaction against the old false test of reality as the tangible. This failure to distinguish between the real and the material (a refinement of the tangible), the real and the important, the real and the good, the real and the spiritual, lingers on into our own day in various forms, one amongst them being the language of the sciences, where “reality” is sometimes used as a synonym for “the external world.”<sup>2</sup> The doctrines of Christian Science, Higher Thought and similar sects, and many of the teachings of Theosophy, show it in still cruder forms. We are inclined emotionally to attach too much value to material things, to be too much under the influence of the body, hence Christian Scientists assert their independence of these by a form of “wishing them dead.” They say material things are non-existent, not real, or at any rate not *so* real as the things we have learnt to value more. To the theosophist emotion and mind are things of primary importance and hence the most “real,” but if real then they must be tangible, therefore we read in a recent theosophical primer that there is “a normally unseen realm of non-physical matter around us.” “Two vast spheres surround the earth, not unlike

<sup>1</sup> Mind and matter are facts of different orders “apprehended in two radically different ways, the one by sense-perception, the other by reflective introspection.” Wm. McDougall, “Body and Mind,” 1911, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* in the phrase “adaptation to reality.”

a giant atmosphere, yet at the same time permeating everywhere the physical matter of the earth with the same ease that water vapour spreads through the air." . . . "The matter of which they are formed is not physical in its characteristics, and, for want of better descriptive terms has been called emotional and mental matter."<sup>1</sup>

Such views as these are held by some people of high mental ability and cultivation but they belong, nevertheless, to a primitive and unconscious stratum of thought. They are views which will not bear the light of conscious criticism. It is suggested here that they are held, not with the complete and harmonious personality, but under the influence of unconscious motives, for the sake of some subjective truth which they indirectly express, some starved and thwarted longing of the soul which is crowded out of the conscious life, denied its birthright, but given compensation of a sort.

Civilised man has long since passed the stage when he inevitably and naturally confuses categories to this extent ; he can no longer be sure of the agreement of his fellows when he maintains that because mind is greater than matter, matter is less real ; or because mind is good and matter is not mind, therefore it is the opposite of good and evil ; just as he has got beyond the stage when air is felt to be less material than earth or water.<sup>2</sup> If educated people are still to be found who maintain such views it is because they allow unconscious tendencies to direct their thought and control their reason for the sake of symbolical expression thereby of repressed desires, or, in other words, because they succumb to the temptation of slothful thinking.

*Primitive man regards mind and matter as inseparable and existing in all things.* Every object which attracts attention has a soul and a body.

<sup>1</sup> Irving S. Cooper, "Theosophy Simplified," 1916.

<sup>2</sup> The difference between mind and matter is no less fundamental when it is translated into terms of "energy" and called the difference between psychic and physical energy.

"The corpse remains quasi-animated. It can eat and drink. Its mutilation injures the spirit. If unburied it suffers from exposure."<sup>1</sup>

We repudiate such a barbarous notion, but which of us does not know himself in a dreamy state to be capable at least of this very confusion of thought, or feel his flesh creep at Mr. Jacob's story of the "Monkey's Paw?" In the quasi-animated dead body, as is shown in our dreams, unconscious repressed sexuality has found a symbol so apt that it takes more than a scientific education to clear our minds of the uncanny terror of living corpses.<sup>2</sup>

"The dead body is as far as possible protected and preserved that the spirit may at the proper time rejoin it. But since in reality the corpse decays, what is the soul to do?" The soul cannot be conceived of otherwise than as material, so it hovers about in a shadowy body, "a thin aerial substance" in which it is enfeebled and unhappy, or it "finds itself a new home by passing into another being."<sup>3</sup> Anthropologists have shown that the belief in reincarnation, which later on receives a philosophical explanation, originates in this crude inability to distinguish between mind and body. The soul of the deceased must be visible and tangible, it must therefore be in the newly-born child.<sup>4</sup> Reincarnation is believed in at one level of thought by cultured Hindus and at another by the natives of Australia and many primitive peoples of Africa, India, Europe and America.<sup>5</sup>

The same inability to conceive of mind and matter as separate, in spite of the actual facts of death and dissolution, leads us to-day in the same directions, as

<sup>1</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Morals in Evolution," 1906, Vol. II., p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, Chap. VIII., p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Stefansson found amongst the Eskimos he lived with a belief that the spirit of the last person to die entered into the next child born, and in a sense *was* that child. See *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Frazer, "The Golden Bough," "The Magic Art," Vol. I., 3rd ed., 1911, p. 103.

may be seen in the forms taken by the vogue of spiritualism. The spirit leaves the body, but we think of it not as spirit which may act on spirit direct, but as inseparable from some sort of quasi-material body which acts on our bodies through moving intermediary objects, tables, pencils and what not.

*Primitive man confuses between identity and resemblance and, between identity and association by contiguity.*

If he could formulate the laws of his thought they would be Frazer's "laws of similarity and contact," that like produces like, the effect resembles the cause, and that things which have been in contact continue to act on each other. But, as Frazer points out, he does not explicitly think them, he implicitly assumes them,<sup>1</sup> his mind has not yet passed beyond the intuitive to the consciously rational stage of thought.

To take these "laws" in order :

Primitive man has an unquestioning *belief that "like produces like,"* the effect resembles the cause.

"Chrysolite, being clear and bright, typifies wisdom. Accordingly, the wearing of chrysolite brings wisdom."<sup>2</sup>

Profligacy and asceticism both aid the fertility of the crops, for both suggest reproductive force, the first in action, the second in reserve;<sup>3</sup> but if a man who had buried a corpse were to plant a tree, the tree would wither.<sup>4</sup>

A full-blooded man or beast is a strong one, "the blood is the strength," therefore blood will make a man strong whether imbibed or spurted over him.

May not some vegetarians' horror of flesh be the outcome of an inverted form of this belief, and the popular faith in the strengthening properties of butcher's meat a survival of it?

<sup>1</sup> "The Magic Art," Vol. I., 3rd ed., pp. 52 and 53.

<sup>2</sup> Traill, "Social England," 3rd ed., 1897, Vol. II., p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, "The Magic Art," Vol. II., 3rd ed., 1911, Chap. XI.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, "Taboo," etc., 3rd ed., p. 349, and "The Magic Art," Vol. I., p. 142, etc.

Poured out on the ground, the blood of the strong will take away the sterility of the earth and make it strong to bear crops.<sup>1</sup>

"The Blood of Jesus sinking into the ground gave to this earth a new life."<sup>2</sup> This last quotation is not from a book of medieval magic, it is from "Meditations for the Month of July," published in 1915 and supplied in one of our central Catholic Churches. These meditations have as their theme "The Precious Blood."

The Hindus' cure for jaundice was to banish the patient's yellow colour to objects which were properly yellow, such as the sun, and to make him a nice red by means of a red bull.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Williams's "pink pills" cure "pale people" far better than Bland's, although a Bland's pill is the same pill in another coat.<sup>4</sup> We allow ourselves to retain this kind of primitive magical belief, because it seems so harmless. Our conscience does not call us to destroy it, as it does, for instance, the belief in sorcery, yet it is no less a kind of sorcery, and we are playing with fire, as those who have studied the development of mind most closely impressively warn us.<sup>5</sup>

*Like induces like.* We read in the Bible,<sup>6</sup> how, when it was debated whether the king should make war upon Syria, one of his soothsayers "made him horns of iron," and said, "Thus saith the Lord. With these shalt thou push Syria until they be consumed." The custom of wearing horns on the helmet wherewith to push the enemy until he should be consumed is widespread.<sup>7</sup> A picturesque survival of it is seen in a church ceremony in which the Church of Rome still suggests the

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., Vol. I., pp. 90-95.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. R. F. Clarke, S.J., "The Precious Blood," London Catholic Truth Society, 1915, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, "The Magic Art," Vol. I., p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> "Secret Remedies," British Medical Association.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, p. 401; Frazer, "Magic Art," Vol. I., 3rd ed., p. 236.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Chron., XVIII, 10.

<sup>7</sup> See F. T. Elworthy, "Horns of Honour," 1900.

arming of her champions with horns wherewith to conquer her enemies. At the consecration of a bishop when the mitre is put on his head a prayer is uttered that "with his head armed with the horns of either Testament he may appear terrible to the gainsayers of the truth and may become their vigorous assailant."

Who knows how much of respect and awe is paid to the horns and how much to the wearer? We keep many of the forms and ceremonies of a past civilisation, and we like to think in so doing that we are solely actuated by a civilised and rational regard for the great men of the past, a pious and natural desire to do them honour and to acknowledge our inheritance. All the time we are prone ourselves to relapse into archaic modes of thought and feeling which we have consciously outgrown. We do our ancestors more honour by advancing beyond them as they in their day advanced beyond theirs. Some distinctions were newly discerned in their time, and to these they held fast. Others have been discovered since their time, and we should not let them be obliterated. But we are unconsciously inclined to adopt ancient fallacies in a modern guise. Thus with the general acceptance of "evolution," the old confusion between identity and resemblance, the fallacy that effect resembles cause, turned up again in a new form. If certain modern scientists who succumb to it were to formulate their "law of similarity" it would be that "a thing is identical with that from which it is descended." We are told by some psycho-analysts that our interests are fundamentally sexual because that was the character of the interests of those humble animals from whom we claim descent.

*Things that have been in contact or have belonged to each other continue to a certain extent to be or to influence each other.*

The dead warrior's shield continues to exert his power. The desire for or dread of the warrior tends

to perpetuate the notion. The love that is attached to the absent husband or son clings to the coat which he has left behind. One would not have it destroyed for worlds. Here a natural, healthy sentiment may be seen passing by degrees through the veneration of relics to fetichism in one of its forms, in which psychoanalysts think they detect a sexual element.

Similarly, if one hate a person, all that recalls him strongly is repulsive to one. A natural, spontaneous love or hatred vents itself on any object vividly reminding one of the loved or hated person. If I cannot kick or burn the scoundrel himself, I will kick or burn his effigy : if I cannot kiss the beloved, I will kiss her portrait or her glove. If I cannot go and strike a blow at the Germans, I will strike out every German name in the books I borrow from the library.<sup>1</sup> We feel as though whatever we do to the reminiscent object will have an effect on the person to whom it belongs. The feeling seems to us perfectly natural, but that is no evidence of its harmlessness. So do the grossest superstitions to those who believe in them. A conviction that it is perfectly natural is the hall-mark of the unconscious origin of any tendency it accompanies, and is attached alike to our truest inspirations, our neurotic symptoms and our harmful superstitions. The whole of sympathetic magic with its attendant horrors received this hall-mark, and still lies on the other side of a thin partition ready again to control our civilisation if once we destroy the barrier imposed by reason.

The seemingly harmless tendency to associate his personal belongings with the feared or beloved individual, accompanied by a belief in the evil wishes of neighbours, is at the bottom of witchcraft. The more our own capacities for hatred and revenge are repressed into the unconscious, the more readily shall we suspect their presence in others, for our own incom-

<sup>1</sup> In the books of two public libraries in different towns the writer has found this done.

pletely realised feelings and thoughts are those with which we are most inclined to credit other people. Witches had a bad time of it, but so had their persecutors, poor creatures who lived in a world full of evil-minded people possessing diabolic powers—a world where men and women like the Kaiser of to-day or “Boney” of old were to be found in every street allowed to roam at large—so blind were most men to their own danger. There are Public Men to-day who live in a world not so dissimilar, and who find themselves “voices crying in the wilderness”; they exhort people to realise the dangers that surround them from Jews, Jesuits or Germans, but they exhort in vain as a rule because the general level of culture is above their own; reason is brought to criticise intuition and impulse, the conscious is brought to bear upon the unconscious mind.

When we remember the medieval assumptions as to what kinds of action were possible, and the prevailing conviction that, according to Tertullian’s famous maxim, the incredibility of a thing constituted a *prima facie* reason for believing it, the wonder is not that so many witches were put to death, but so few.<sup>1</sup> It speaks volumes for the fundamental goodness of human nature and for the frequency of wise, benevolent and highly-developed personalities amongst the popular leaders of thought. Men like Anselm and Francis and Bernard shared all the credulous beliefs of their day, but no one of them would have had a woman hanged or burned to death. Had they met a witch who in their opinion deserved such a fate they would have believed in the possibility of her conversion. The alleged crimes of witches aroused in them no panic fear, because they had no latent capacity for similar crimes in their own unconscious minds. At whatever stage of civilisation

<sup>1</sup> If the records are to be believed, the persecution of witches flourished in England for 160 years. *Two pushing men* sent more witches to the gallows in 14 months than were sent during the whole of the rest of the period. “A History of Witchcraft,” *op. cit.*, pp. 195 and 199.

men live, from the most primitive to the most enlightened, they do not do cruel things to one another if they are ordinarily kind-hearted men and in addition have a harmonious relation between their conscious and unconscious minds. To the ordinary man, such harmony is of great importance to his morality. Without it, he is liable to be cruel in certain directions.<sup>1</sup> The moral genius can better dispense with it, for moral genius alone makes men morally ahead of their times.

Clear thinking alone does nothing for moral progress, but it helps people of inferior feeling to live up to the standard of their time. Since moral genius is at all times rare, clear thinking becomes a duty, and clear thinking is necessarily independent thinking, the greatest obstacle to which is to be found in the unrealised tendencies of the unconscious mind. If we allowed our uneducated, uncriticised, unconscious minds to control our conscious minds, as we are always in danger of doing, we should soon be back in the superstitions of the past, which we have by no means completely outgrown. Then we should have lost our birthright of freedom, the hard-won reward of centuries of civilisation. For primitive man is the least free of men. "There is more liberty in the best sense," says Frazer<sup>2</sup>—"liberty to think our own thoughts and fashion our own destinies—under the most grinding tyranny, than under the apparent freedom of savage life, where the individual's lot is cast from the cradle to the grave in the iron mould of hereditary custom." So with the unredeemed unconscious mind. Repression into the unconscious is always in the interests of "hereditary custom," authority uncritically accepted from a previous

<sup>1</sup> Many lives would have been spared if the witch hunters had recognised their own repressed sexuality.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, "The Golden Bough," "The Magic Art," 3rd ed., Vol. I., p. 218. See also his "Psyche's Task," 1909, p. 47, etc. "Among many savages the sexual prohibitions are far more numerous, the horror excited by breaches of them far deeper, and the punishment inflicted on the offenders far sterner than with us."

generation, Freud's "moral censor," Jung's "collective unconscious."

It is in the interests of "authority" that we fetter the growing forces within our own souls; alike through childhood and manhood we coerce and enslave the child and the man within ourselves, rebelling unconsciously all the time against our own unconscious tyranny.

"In every cry of every man  
In every infant's cry of fear  
In every voice, in every ban  
The mind-forged manacles I hear."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Wm. Blake."

V

THE PLACE OF PSYCHO-  
ANALYSIS IN LIFE



V

# THE PLACE OF PSYCHO- ANALYSIS IN LIFE

## CHAPTER XV

### PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND EVOLUTION

*"I say that man was made to grow not stop ; . . .  
The ladder-rung his foot has left may fall,  
Since all things suffer change save God the Truth."*

—(St. John *loq.*) R. BROWNING.

WE have now reached a point where we may consider how the psycho-analytic theories originated by Freud fit in with the accepted view of human progress. Are they in consonance with the current theories concerning individual and social development, intellectual and moral? If we find that they are not, we shall not necessarily discard either, but one or the other or both must be modified. While we believe that truth is absolute, we have come to regard the particular truths we see as relative to truth as a whole which we see only incompletely. The test nowadays of the truth of an idea, or the reality of a thing, is whether it fits in with all our other ideas, our whole scheme of reality. We regard our knowledge of reality as something that is constantly being modified, readjusted, something which develops with our increasing knowledge of observed facts, including facts about the working of our

own minds, about the way in which we arrive at our knowledge of reality.

The world in general has accepted the doctrine of Evolution with its implication that man has a common ancestry with the higher apes.<sup>1</sup> We believe that life on our planet started in the simplest creature such as an amœba, and in the course of millions of years of development, passing through the whole animal hierarchy, came to be in man.

Each form endowed with life was, within limits, determined by the previous form. Man has in his bodily structure traces of his descent from the ancestors of the present-day mollusc, lizard and ape.<sup>2</sup> The developing embryo retreads, to some extent at least, the path taken by the embryos of its ancestors.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps because we are men of to-day the man of to-day seems to us the highest form of life, but when we look closely at the course of evolution we cannot see that it tends necessarily to produce the higher type, only the type best fitted to survive in the conditions under which it is placed.<sup>4</sup> In the plant world, it is clear that present-day "flora" are not a match for the flora of Mesozoic times, in size or beauty or complexity of organisation. "This superiority of the old to the new might seem surprising if we took the obvious view that Evolution is a regular progression from the simple to the complex. This, however, is far from being the case; evolution is to be compared to the successive waves of a flowing tide, rather than the steady rise of a calm river."<sup>5</sup>

Now if there is nothing inherent in the nature of

<sup>1</sup> Modern estimates date the separation of the human stem and the ape stem from the common ancestral stem at about two million years ago, the appearance in the world of present day man at about one million. See "The Antiquity of Man," by Arthur Keith, 1914, p. 510.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Dendy, "Outlines of Evolutionary Biology," 1912, Chap. XVII.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson and Geddes, "Evolution," Home University Library, 54; and J. A. Thomson, "Darwinism and Human Life," 1909.

<sup>4</sup> See Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> D. H. Scott, "The Evolution of Plants," Home University Library, 237.

evolution to improve the race, it devolves upon us to throw off our fatalism and improve ourselves. The fact is so important from this point of view that I may be allowed a further illustration. We are lucky in having found fossil remains which have enabled experts to trace the development of *Equus caballus*, the horse. "Twelve stages have been recognised . . . showing the gradual evolution of the race into its modern form.<sup>1</sup> The horse of to-day is about 64 inches high. Its geologic history starts with "Eohippus" of Eocene times, a little creature not more than 11 inches high with four toes on each of its fore- and three on its hind-feet. Its back was arched, its head and neck were short and the limbs of moderate length.<sup>2</sup>

Later on, as "Meshippus," in the Oligocene period, he has grown to about the size of a sheep. In his front feet, which are now three-toed like the back, the middle toe has grown larger and longer than the others and bears his whole weight except when he walks on marshy ground. These "small and almost fox-like creatures in all probability frequented the swampy shores of lakes and marshes." They were "little if any faster than badgers,"<sup>3</sup> but they were much better adapted to their marshy surroundings than the modern horse would be.

In Miocene times, "Protohippus" is about 36 inches high. His middle toes alone touch the ground, though he has three on each foot.

In Pliocene times his descendant, "Hipparion," is 40 inches high, lives on prairies and is becoming swift-footed. And so the story goes on till we come to the "prehistoric" horse depicted by palæolithic man on the walls of the cavern of Altamira and elsewhere<sup>4</sup> and recognisable as the present-day wild horse whom we

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Matthew, quoted by Thomson and Geddes, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> R. S. Lull, "The Evolution of the Horse Family," p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> R. Lydekker, "The Horse," p. 239.

<sup>4</sup> For reproductions, see "Prehistoric Art," E. A. Parkyn; and "Prehistoric Man and his Story," G. F. Scott Elliot, 1915, p. 210.

can see in the Zoo—for since domestication the horse's development has not been left to "natural selection."<sup>1</sup> We see him start admirably adapted to his marshy environment, and he ends equally well adapted for life on the open plains. There are both progression and retrogression in the process. He loses toe after toe till only one on each foot remains; he becomes taller and swifter, gains a long neck, more complex teeth and a larger brain; changes in short from "the short-legged, splay-footed plodder of the Eocene marshes" to the "light-footed horse running on tiptoe on the dry plains."<sup>2</sup>

The "fittest" who "survive" are not necessarily in any sense of the word the highest; they are those who find it most possible under the circumstances of the moment to get a living. As Mr. Hobhouse points out,<sup>3</sup> if one of a family develops a liking for food of a different kind, the pressure on the others is lightened and their chances of survival are improved.

Summing up, he says, "The tendency of evolution as a whole is not to produce the highest type, but rather to produce as many types as possible . . . not necessarily destroying any but those which have not the character of their own kind in sufficient strength. Evolution tends to space out the types that it suffers, to cut them deep and true. It multiplies and it defines but it does not necessarily elevate."<sup>4</sup>

The character of evolution does not seem to change at first when it comes to man. Man's mind, inherited from his animal ancestors, is, to start with, just one more faculty enabling him to adapt himself to his surroundings and so to get a living. Its working is all along the lines of instinct; his actions, as it were, proceed of them-

<sup>1</sup> For three distinct species of horse in the Stone Age and their modern descendants, see G. F. Scott Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-209.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson and Geddes, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 30; for picture, see Dendy, "Outlines of Evolutionary Biology," p. 308.

<sup>3</sup> Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

selves without his directing them. He wants a thing and in a blurred sort of way he feels that he wants it, and the want sets up in him a series of reflex actions which he does not understand and does not direct, but which tend to get him the thing he desires.

Applying the Freudian ideas at this point, we should say that the mind he inherits from his animal ancestors is completely unconscious mind, while so long as its workings remain at the level of instinct his mind remains unconscious.

But somewhere within the sphere of instinct intelligence is born. "Instinct," says Mr. Hobhouse, "is so interwoven with intelligence that the two factors become exceedingly difficult to disentangle."<sup>1</sup>

"Instinct is not the mysteriously unerring guide that tradition has made of it. . . . It often undergoes development in the lifetime of the individual; it often misleads its possessor, and it is, at any rate in its higher forms, capable of well-directed modifications."<sup>2</sup>

From desire baffled through errors of instinct is developed intelligent action, action consciously directed to an end; and from groping amongst impulsive actions for a means towards the desired end, is developed consciousness of the means.

"As intelligence rises the fixed processes of instinct dissolve. . . . The mind at first grasps only a little bit of what instinct prompts," and it gradually extends its sphere "until it grasps the final purpose and meaning of conduct."<sup>3</sup>

At this stage there comes into existence the conscious in distinction to the unconscious mind.

The turning point in the progress of man arrives when he "becomes aware of the possibilities of his own growth as he grows." Then "there comes a stage when conception of the perfected growth seizes upon

<sup>1</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, pp. 47 and 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

him and makes him intelligently work towards it.”<sup>1</sup>  
 “The broad possibilities of development are already determined in the germ, but . . . the actual growth is determined by the conception of the end itself and may be modified as that conception requires.”<sup>2</sup>

For something like ninety thousand years, Mr. Hobhouse surmises, the human race “belonged to the lowest stage of culture—the stage in which men had not learned to grind and polish their stone tools and weapons.”<sup>3</sup> When his evolution became self-conscious (just as with the education of Helen Keller), his progress advanced by leaps and bounds. The unconscious becomes subservient to the conscious. A confused blur of mingled thought and feeling in the germ is replaced by clear thought and feeling, impulse gives place to will, immediate cravings are subordinated to a far goal; the longer-viewed, co-ordinating, unifying desires take control, and the whole personality directs every activity.

In a sense, man remains as instinctive as his primitive ancestors, for all human activity is based upon impulse, but the activities distinctive of man which differentiate him from the animals are the co-ordinating, unifying instincts, which concern themselves with other instincts as their material.<sup>4</sup> The desire to rationalise is one of them. “For every partial fact, thought demands an explanation which will connect it with reality as a whole,”<sup>5</sup> and there are people in every age whose main interest in life is to understand life.

Even when we force our natural instincts and repress our desires into the unconscious, we are acting naturally, we cannot get away from Nature. It is as natural for man to defy his nature and restrict his own freedom by artificial laws and customs, as it is natural for the wild

<sup>1</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, “Mind in Evolution,” 1901, p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 401.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dr. McDougall, “An Introduction to Social Psychology,” 2nd ed., 1909, pp. 42, 43 and 44.

<sup>5</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

beast in its native lair to restrict its appetite in order to share with its young. It is also natural to man to criticise and modify his own activities, and when his artificial restrictions of liberty begin to irk him he will change them, but not before. They will begin to irk him when he sees that though natural enough—as natural as anything else about him—they are not in a line with the main tendency of his development, which has now become his consciously realised aim. When man comes to understand his own unconscious mind he will find that many of his customs and opinions need modification to bring them into harmony with the main stream of progress.

He will find, too, a store of energy waiting to be harnessed to his highest purposes now wasted in unconscious conflict and in neurotic activities which are the result of unconscious conflict.<sup>1</sup> In the individual as well as in the race, direct and normal expression of desires will supersede indirect and neurotic expression, resulting from repression and from under-development. At one time of the race's history, inhibitive energy was not wasted but usefully employed, but as soon as the aim of progress becomes a deliberate one, constructive forms of energy succeed destructive in every department of human activity; "thou shalt" supersedes "thou shalt not."

Amongst the higher, co-ordinating, distinctively human desires and instincts one predominates, the ethical, or the desire to be good. It has perhaps only two competitors, the desire for knowledge and the desire for power (and for freedom and riches as a means to power). With the ancient Greeks and perhaps in the Italy of the Renaissance the desire for beauty was its peer, and may become so again.

Man's ethical development is individual and social and the two are inseparable in fact, though separable in idea. Every advance in one implies a corresponding

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, gambling, drunkenness, war and sexual vice.

advance in the other, and *vice versa*. Both can be measured by the development of his ethical conception of God.

The history of man's social progress has been the history of the widening of the bounds within which the tie of fellowship has been recognised, beginning with the family and the clan and ending with humanity as a whole.<sup>1</sup> "The ethical conception of a common human nature as supreme over all differences . . . the fundamental kinship of men," making the good of each the good of all, supplies the unifying co-ordinating principle in self-conscious development. Co-operation supersedes conflict.<sup>2</sup> The binding force within each of the smaller groups is not lessened by their being seen in a new perspective as parts of a system of groups, the larger containing the smaller, and the largest of all containing the rest as within an organic whole. Whereas these groups were formerly antagonistic they have now become compatible, supplementary, harmonious. Friendly emulation supersedes strife.

Here we may close our brief survey of human evolution and inquire, how do the teachings of psycho-analysis agree therewith.

Psycho-analysis reaches the same conclusions along a separate line of inquiry—the development of the unconscious mind. All that psycho-analysts have discovered illustrates and is confirmed by this theory of human progress. What biologists, psychologists and anthropologists have found to be true of "humanity," the psycho-analyst has found to be true of the individual human being. To the scheme of progress in "the ascent of man," psycho-analysts find a parallel scheme of progress in the individual mind; it involves the same direction and co-ordination of the more animal by the distinctively human strivings, the same substitution of co-operation for conflict.

<sup>1</sup> See Westermarck, "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," 1908, Vol. II., pp. 743-744.

<sup>2</sup> J. T. Hobhouse, "Mind in Evolution," 1901, p. 397.

The student of the unconscious mind knows well that he has within himself instincts and impulses of an animal nature which in themselves are neither good nor bad, but which come into conflict with his higher, more distinctively human, interests and desires. Of these some of the most important belong to the sphere of sex. He knows too that he has a great longing to reconcile the two camps of conflicting motives. "Let me not always say, '*spite* of this flesh to-day I strove, gained ground, made headway on the whole.' As the bird wings and sings, let me cry, 'all good things are mine, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul.'" He longs for inner harmony, a resolution of conflict, lower and higher, desires, appetites, passions and interests all working together in harmony over the whole field of motive. He finds that some things must be given up in order that others more desired may be allowed to grow. Self-development, self-expression are achieved by the sacrifice of what is less himself to what is more himself. The distinctively animal gives way in order to express the distinctively human, the wicked or diabolical goes in order to express the divine. It is felt to be more desirable for a man to be a man (even a bad man) than a mere animal, and more desirable to be a good man than a bad.

The student of the unconscious mind through the psycho-analytic method, if he be neurotic, will have repressed his animal nature to a great extent, regarding it mistakenly as evil in itself. He will learn his mistake, will make the repressed desires conscious, and direct the energy that belongs to them into channels compatible with his whole being conscious and unconscious together. In his unconscious mind he will find a counterpart to the thoughts and feelings of man in the earlier phases of the race's development, the same markedly instinctive and impulsive character, the same emotional living from hand to mouth, as it were, the same limitation of his benevolent feelings to a small

group, the same absorption of interest in himself and his own needs, and the same tendency to interpret external objects in terms of these. He will find too in the unconscious the germs of all the progressive forces in the history of man. Man is driven by impulse to reason, to unify, to consider how far his theories correspond with his practice, to distinguish between his inherited uncriticised stock of opinions and those which he has originated or made his own by considerate adoption.

The student of the unconscious will find that self-development, wherever it is made the conscious and deliberate aim of human effort, stultifies itself; that progress, like happiness, is an end attained by shaping one's course for another goal; that life fundamentally is an art and not a science, and that it consists in the creation not merely the criticism of power, goodness, truth and beauty, each of these for its own sake and for the sake of goodness, in the measure natural to the unhampered individual character.

Psycho-analysis helps everyone to live his own life more courageously and surely, and so to be a better instrument, a more effective unit in the progress of humanity.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND MORALITY AND RELIGION

*"As we do not create the objective world in knowing it, so we do not create the moral world by our moral action. The process of morality is a process of interpretation."*—HENRY JONES.

IN the last chapter we have briefly surveyed the current scientific doctrine of evolution and seen how psycho-analytic theories fit in with it. We shall now inquire how they tally with religion and morality, meaning by these terms both the moral feelings of ordinary people (whether formulated or not) and the opinions about those feelings formed by students of mental science.

Those doubts as to the "morality" of psycho-analysis in the ordinary sense which arise from misrepresentation need not detain us, but only such as are reasonable and, indeed, are bound to occur to the mind of every thoughtful student of the subject.

"Is it a good thing," he asks, "to stir up the unconscious? If I am a respectable citizen keeping the commandments but chronically unhappy, or suffering from nervous ill-health, is it not better that I should put up with my ill-health or my depression rather than have dangerous passions roused within me, which may lead to my kicking over the restraints of society and doing other people harm?"

That is the question which presents itself and which is of great practical importance, for if we decide that

it is better to "let the sleeping dogs" of the unconscious "lie," since they may do much harm before they are brought under control, then psycho-analysis is indeed a risky and pernicious method of treatment along mistaken lines. It will help us to judge the point if we realise that precisely the same question exists with regard to education.

It was common enough twenty years ago to meet with people who believed that "Board School Education" was ruining the characters of the present generation. When England raised from amongst Board-School-educated men and boys the largest volunteer army in history, to fight in a just and disinterested cause, the old argument fell to the ground. It now retreats to its second line of defence, that "too much" education is bad for the lower classes or for the so-called inferior races.

The distrust with which psycho-analysis meets is a similar distrust based on similar grounds. Psycho-analytic treatment, like education, is a means of enlightenment, and consequently an aid to development, in the case both of the neurotic and of the nervously sound. Both help to bring out what is in a man.

To a certain extent the development of any man's mind, like the development of mind in the race, is of a kind characteristic of biological evolution. It tends, as we have seen that tending, towards variation and discrimination, multiplying and defining, but not necessarily elevating.<sup>1</sup> Especially where education is one-sided it may make a man more able, but not a better or more desirable man in any other way. If a man be a thief by choice and not by circumstance only, then should he become further educated, or undergo psycho-analytic treatment, he may become a more clever thief. He cannot be any worse morally for being a more capable thief, but neither is he necessarily any better.

<sup>1</sup> See last Chap., p. 200.

The advocates of psycho-analysis, like those of education, assume that enlightenment cannot by its nature be morally pernicious, that in the long run all the various strands of human progress hang together and aid each other, that intellectual enlightenment and morality are allies, and that each indirectly promotes the cause of the other. That is undoubtedly the assumption upon which psycho-analytic procedure justifies itself, and it may be asked whether the assumption is well grounded. How do we come to hold it?

With some it is held as a conclusion forced upon us by a study of history. Those who have traced the course of human development most closely have discovered in it a progress from the less good to the morally better.<sup>1</sup> With others, it is a conviction intuitively held, it may be, as an article of religious faith, but one which is ultimately rational. For true intuition does not contradict reason; it will bear the test of logic. It is in its nature capable of logical formulation, but our thinking capacities are unequal to the task; the syllogisms have to remain implicit because we cannot yet master the tangled theme with sufficient clearness to make them explicit.

We assume, then, that development cannot make a man worse. Our thief will not be made a worse man; but for a time, at any rate, he may be made a more effective thief.

But we are not so afraid of our propensities towards thieving. The real doubt which disturbs us is this: if a man is not an adulterer but is capable of becoming one, will psycho-analysis make him an adulterer? According to the teaching of the Christian religion, he is one already, but not in the eye of the law. I may have a desire to "commit adultery" and repress this desire into the unconscious; then an insight into my unconscious mind may show me that the only

<sup>1</sup> For a general survey, see L. T. Hobhouse. "Morals in Evolution," 1906 (summary, Chap. VIII., Vol. II.).

thing which really prevents me from gratifying the desire is my fear of public opinion. This fear of public opinion is as real as the desire to gratify my passions, and so far, though by an underground method, it has held the field. It may be, when understood, that I make it my own reasonable opinion; then it will continue to hold the field but in the light of consciousness. In that case I shall still restrain my passions, but no longer because of my "bondage to the law," rather from deliberate choice. Or it may be that, when understood, public opinion on this matter is for me a pricked bubble; my own opinion is different, and by it I choose to guide my conduct. Then I shall break the so-called moral law, which no longer seems to me moral but immoral, and become an adulterer; only the sting will have gone out of the name because I am not ashamed of what I have done, it seems to me right not wrong. If I feel my own view of the matter to be true, and the popular view false, I may "by my life and doctrine" try to change the popular view, and convert the public to my own way of thinking. As I continue to grow, my views will change, and if they are the views of my complete and harmonious self, so far as I am harmonised at all, at each stage of their development my conduct will change to keep pace with them. The psycho-analyst would hold that at each stage I was a better man.<sup>1</sup> Public opinion might judge differently.

There is room for difference of opinion on this important subject, but let us get the position we occupy as clear as we can. The psycho-analyst holds that an unconscious vice is worse than a conscious, because while it is no less a vice, and as such absorbs energy and leads to vicious action, it is less under the control of the will.

Those who defend repression forget that one can never

<sup>1</sup> For a similar view of individual development, see Rendel Harris, "The Guiding Hand of God."

ensure its effectiveness. People who repress their bad dispositions are apt to find themselves suddenly at their mercy, whenever normal powers of self-control are lessened, as in the course of life they are sometimes bound to be, by illness, over-tiredness, nervous strain or by the approach of senility, middle-age, or any one of the so-called critical ages. Repression is not a safe method of dealing with vices, even from the police point of view. So long as a man has a fundamental desire to be good it is safer for him to know his potential crimes and consciously cope with them.

But what of the man who does not desire to be good—if such an one exist?

The very fact that an evil tendency is repressed shows an opposing force, an anti-evil motive, which when brought into consciousness can be made constructive and not merely inhibitory.<sup>1</sup>

In order to probe the matter as far as possible, let us imagine a man who is completely bad, and let us suppose that he has repressions which keep him from actually doing all the harm of which he is capable. How would psycho-analysis affect him?

To begin with, we may dismiss the idea of such a man being of a purely animal nature. A creature who is purely animal indulges all his desires unquestioningly, so far as circumstances permit. His instincts may be thwarted, but not repressed in the technical sense of the term, since repression implies inhibitory motive, motive which is specifically human and capable of development away from the animal towards the divine.<sup>2</sup>

But suppose the man in question to have a devilish nature. If he had in him any trace of good, psycho-

<sup>1</sup> "All inhibitions . . . appear to be supplementary or negative aspects of positive excitations."—McDougall, "An Introduction to Social Psychology," 2nd ed., 1909, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> For the subject of neurosis in horses and dogs, see footnote, Chap. III., p. 38. The question awaits the study of psycho-analysts how much neurosis is due to repression and how much to instincts starved of necessity like the caged bird's.

analysis would bring it out, and immediately conflict would arise, and the flicker of good would have either to be extinguished or to grow, making the man, as it grew, less and less devilish and more and more human.<sup>1</sup> If he had no such grain of goodness, psycho-analysis could do nothing for him, but it would disclose the danger incurred by his companions.

Shakespeare's Iago is a portrait of such a man. It may reasonably be held that we cannot find a single trace in him of a good motive, that his good is evil, and that he means what he says when, after devising his diabolical plan for arousing Othello's jealousy, he finishes his soliloquy with

" Hell and night,  
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light." <sup>2</sup>

Incidentally, an Iago is a danger to society, which has to protect itself by restricting his liberty of action. Iago had to be killed. But it took people a long time to detect his character, his deliberately assumed mask of bluff downrightness was one which reflected their own disinterested honesty and good feeling. The analysis of a single one of his dreams would probably have unmasked him to the analyst. Like his soliloquies, they would have savoured of "hell and night."

Our argument would seem to prove that psycho-analysis cannot have an immoral effect upon a man through leading him to realise his repressed emotions, to feel more freely.

There still remains the question whether it has an immoral tendency through its encouragement of free thinking, its critical destruction of the binding force of authority. This question goes to the heart of the moral problem. Our answer to it depends upon our conception of morality.

Current morality, we should all agree, is the set of

<sup>1</sup> The evil man with a spark of goodness is depicted in Count Guido Franceschini. Browning's "The Ring and the Book."

<sup>2</sup> Othello, I. Sc. iii, end.

opinions on matters of right and wrong held by the majority of the most highly-respected people of their time.

Psycho-analysis (again like education) leads a man to criticise current morality, and not to accept it as authoritative. He may recognise his personal inferiority to the leaders of thought, but he does not on this account accept what they think and feel as necessarily binding on him ; he finds out what he himself thinks and feels.

The psycho-analyst finds that a large part of the coercive force of authority is a survival from a stage of mental development which the race is outgrowing. One factor of the power of authority is left, however, the cogency of which becomes greater not less when freed from its more primitive accompaniments. If a man thinks and feels differently on any subject from his contemporaries, the difference should lead him to keep an open mind ; but on questions of morality it is not to the best people of his time that he is likely to refer for enlightenment so much as to the moral genius of all time.

Psycho-analysis leads people to form independent judgments on the subject of moral behaviour, independent, that is, of the moral fashion of the day as exhibited in their society, their Church, and the current interpretation of holy writ.

Is it, therefore, immoral ? The great moral and religious reformers have urged men in the same direction, but the controversy is not closed.

There is much to be said on the side of authority, though its case has been prejudiced by the fanatics who stoned the prophets and crucified their Lord, holding that morality was threatened by a search behind actions to motives.

The teaching of Jesus, which embodied the very essence of religion, actually endangered the religion of His parents, resting, as that did, on the authority of the Jewish law ; and ultimately it endangers all religion

similarly based. Every advance in thought is two-sided, destructive as well as constructive, and in destroying the formula which the truth has outgrown the advanced thinker helps to destroy the coherence of the social group, which that formula held together, and the authority the group exerted over individual members.

Doctrines are always adopted in the first place because of the truths they express; a vested interest is set up in them, which is hostile to new truths; they are finally destroyed for the sake of the truths they fail to express. All people, Pharisees included, care about the truth which is expressed in the doctrine, the matter contained in the form; but the prophet cares about this more than most men; in order to enhance its value, he removes it from its setting. Seeing the form made little of, the rank and file imagine the truth itself to be attacked, and in its defence they destroy its champion. Psycho-analysis explains, and so leads to sympathy with, the point of view both of the conservative and the reformer. It can only be held to be immoral by extreme partisans of either side who, in their zeal for a narrow cause, are led to deny that truth and goodness are compatible. As we have already seen, it assumes that human progress is towards the good, that truth and virtue are allies, not enemies.

Before leaving the subject, we may glance at some of the views of modern thinkers with regard to morality and religion, and inquire how does psycho-analysis fit in with these. Morality and religion are concerned with the same set of phenomena seen from different angles.<sup>1</sup>

Both have a progressive and a stable element. To recognise the progress man has made in his morals we need only look at the morality of the Old Testament heroes. Not even the Germans could think it *immoral*

<sup>1</sup> See McDougall, "An Introduction to Social Psychology," 2nd ed., 1909, p. 313.

to spare the enemies' women and children, as did Saul.

To recognise the oneness of all moral insight, we may turn to the message of the prophet Jonah, that it is good and Godlike to prefer the conversion of your country's enemies to their destruction. Like Jonah, we are still trying painfully and reluctantly to live up to this moral conviction.

When we come to inquire as to the inner significance of the stable and progressive elements of morality, we meet with difference of opinion. One school of thought finds the essence of morality to consist in sensitiveness to social approval. "Moral conduct," says Dr. McDougall, "is essentially social conduct, and there could be no serious objection to the use of the two expressions as synonymous."<sup>1</sup>

The opposite school of thought finds the essence of morality to consist in a specific unanalysable feeling of love of goodness and hatred of evil as such, akin to the specific feelings for truth and beauty.<sup>2</sup>

According to the first view, there is no absolute moral good. An action is good which has value for life, either the life of the social group or the life of the individual. The good of one epoch and generation becomes the bad of the next, and *vice versâ*. As man develops he comes to see that the distinction between good and evil is a relative one, that all good has an evil side, and likewise all evil a good side to it. The moral conflict is resolved in a higher unity, in the Hegelian manner, and the idea of God is of a perfect being who transcends the distinction between good and evil.

According to the second view, moral good has an absolute, not a relative value; an action is moral or immoral independently of its value for life. A moral

<sup>1</sup> See McDougall, "An Introduction to Social Psychology," 2nd ed., 1909, p. 174; see also p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Clutton Brook, "Studies in Christianity," 1918.

act might lead to the destruction of the world and be no less moral. Any particular human action has elements in it which are respectively good and evil, but the two are fundamentally irreconcilable. The moral conflict is not capable of resolution in this life, and the idea of God is of a perfect being whom man is finding, who in some way yet unknown to him holds the differences between good and evil together, keeping their absolute distinction.<sup>1</sup>

These two theories regarding the nature of morality would seem to have been framed under the guidance of different kinds of experience. The first looks at a set of facts which show the changeable character of current morality and the need of being tolerant to one's own supposed evil tendencies; the second looks at a set of facts which show the unchangeable character of moral insight and the need of never making terms with one's own sinful capacities. Both theories are reasonable, and both are compatible with the theory of psycho-analysis, which implies no particular philosophy of life, but merely inquires what opinions are harboured by the mind that is being explored. Since, however, there seems some danger of psycho-analysis being identified with the first of these theories, we may briefly indicate a few of the arguments on the opposite side, the side of the absolute as against the relative value of moral goodness.

The adherents of absolute value point to the fact that since man reached the stage of development in which the morally good begins to be distinguished from the practically beneficial, religion from magic, a certain kind of goodness has always been loved and admired in man by man and has always been attributed by man to the chief of the gods.

Five thousand years ago the Egyptians were admiring kindness, cheerfulness and forbearance in man and

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Henry Jones, "Idealism as a Practical Creed," 1910, p. 259.

attributing them to Amen Ra.<sup>1</sup> As Deissmann has pointed out, the praises lavished on the dead in commemorative inscriptions reflect the moral ideas of the time, and there is an underlying resemblance between those of all ages.<sup>2</sup>

Even when men's moral insight has been in advance of their times, it has been appreciated by their contemporaries. It was not their goodness that brought martyrdom to so many of the saints and prophets, it was, as we have seen, the tendency of some part of their teaching, otherwise recognised as good, to endanger and destroy certain convictions already holding the field and felt to be good. Both the old is good and the new, the conserving and the reforming, and it is only when these two goods happen to clash, and before they can become reconciled as mutually compatible, that goodness ever seems detestable. In other cases, a man's goodness may be centuries ahead of his generation, and though it will not be understood it will not be disliked but loved. Anselm's tender pity for the hunted hare which he refused to give up was quite above the heads of the people of his time, but it was felt to be good.<sup>3</sup> The countrymen of St. Francis did not imitate his gentleness to animals, but they loved it. It did not occur to Saul or his chronicler that he could have been urged by any motive other than greed when he disobeyed the Divine command and spared the women and babes of the Amalekites. If Saul had been so "original" as to spare them out of compassion, his action would have been vaguely felt as lovable and applauded.

In all times in judging of an act as good or bad much more stress has been laid on the sincerity of the motive than on the social effect of the act. "In this

<sup>1</sup> See the Maxims of Ptah Hotep, about 3500 B.C., and Hymn to Amen, quoted by Budge, in use between 1600 and 900 B.C. "Literature of the Ancient Egyptians," 1914, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> Deissmann, "Light from the Ancient East," 2nd ed., 1911, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> Church, "St. Anselm," 1898, pp. 98-99.

point," says Westermarck, "moralists of all schools seem to agree."<sup>1</sup> In the end, it matters more that man shall do what he believes to be right than that he shall see clearly what is right. The devil sees clearly.<sup>2</sup> The actions which primitive man applauded as good were actions which good men of to-day would do if back in primitive surroundings, actions done from a desire to be good, from a sense of the absolute value of goodness. Their motive was in a line with the motive prompting the utterances of spiritual genius which have appealed to the hearts of men of all ages, and have not varied much in time.<sup>3</sup>

Our conduct, individual and social, and our habitual level of insight do not come up to our highest moral aspirations, but the latter are preserved even when they are only receiving lip-service. The history of men's progress is the history of their actions slowly, very slowly, overtaking their highest moral convictions as embodied in the teachings of spiritual genius. The rate of progress is to be measured by geological rather than by historical epochs.

If the two conflicting views be carried to their logical conclusions, the first ends in regarding man as in a certain sense the dupe of his own biological needs. "I have done this hard thing, as I imagined, to please God, and all the while it was not to please God but to promote the development of the race." There is no difference, in fact, between moral progress and general evolutionary progress, although religion, as

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I., p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> *Cf.* "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," and are so far to be commended.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* Lao Tze, b. 604 B.C., "I would return good for good, I would also return good for evil," trans. Gorn Old, XLIX.

"Let a man overcome anger by kindness, evil by good;

Let him conquer the stingy by a gift, the liar by truth."—

"Buddhist Manual of Ethics," Rhys Davids's "Buddhism," 1887, p. 128.

"For never in this world does hatred cease by hatred;

Hatred ceases by love; this is always its nature."—*Ibid.*, p. 128.

soon as it comes to be distinguished from magic, is based upon the distinction<sup>1</sup>—the felt difference between success and virtue, between what is useful and what is good. The unique and supreme value attributed to moral goodness is thus a delusion which has been helpful to man's social progress. Now that he is outgrowing the delusion, he must transfer his enthusiasm from moral to general evolutionary progress. There have always been upholders of this view, numbering amongst them some of the most enlightened of men.

The second view ends by forcing us to regard the supreme purpose of the universe as the creation and development of moral goodness. Beauty, truth and goodness are regarded each as having an absolute value, analogous and complementary to each other, while a certain supremacy attaches to goodness.

Each view expresses some truths and omits others, and one set of truths or the other may seem of vital importance to different types of mind. Psycho-analysis is identified with neither, though individual psychoanalysts may be staunch adherents of one view or the other.

<sup>1</sup> Jung refers to the "unhappy combination of religion and morality," as one which must be overcome. "Psychology of the Unconscious," New York, 1916, p. 85.



VI

LIGHT ON BIOGRAPHY FROM  
PSYCHO-ANALYSIS



## VI

# LIGHT ON BIOGRAPHY FROM PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

## CHAPTER XVII

NELSON. ST. ROMUALD. MICHAEL ANGELO

*"Cowardly idealism which diverts our eyes from the woes of life and the weaknesses of the soul I abhor . . . .*

*"There is only one form of heroism in the world, and it consists in seeing the world as it is—and in loving it."*—ROMAIN ROLLAND.

A STUDY of the unconscious mind will be found to throw light upon human motive in general, and especially to elucidate obscure and puzzling chapters in the biography of individuals. A few brief sketches may be in place here to indicate what we may venture to call a psycho-analytic point of view. Some psychoanalysts may not recognise it—may even repudiate it; it is, at any rate, a point of view derived from the leaders of their own school of thought.

The biography of almost anyone will serve our purpose, but in order to secure variety, examples may be selected from amongst men of widely different temperaments, and we cannot perhaps do better than refer to the old distinctions between the man of feeling, of action, of thought, and the lover of beauty, or artist.

An imaginary situation may help us to distinguish the types we have in view. Boswell put his hero this

problem. "Sir, if you were shut up in a castle and a new-born child with you, what would you do?" And Dr. Johnson answered, after some fencing, "Sir, I should feed it."<sup>1</sup> It is what every sensible man would do, but we may imagine four representative men reaching the action along different lines. The man of feeling hears the baby cry and immediately he feels *with* the baby, the baby is a projection of himself, as it were, and he instinctively gropes about for some action to satisfy the baby's craving. "Poor little thing, it wants this, that or the other!" He tries to find out what, for the baby's sake.

The man of thought takes in the situation as himself and the baby and the relation between the two, and he thinks, "What does one do under these circumstances?" Memory and association of ideas supply him with the clue rather than immediate personal feeling. He generalises and refers to general principles of conduct.

The man of action feels the situation immediately, like the man of feeling, but from a different angle. He feels it as a call to do something; for him it is himself-ready-to-act and the baby, through reaction upon whom he gains a desirable self-feeling.<sup>2</sup> He must do this or that to the baby, he must take the situation in hand and cope with it, assert his mastery of it for his own sake.

The artist, like the men of feeling and of action, acts spontaneously, but not out of immediate sympathy with the baby, rather from a sense of the æsthetic values of the situation and an impulse to increase their beauty or diminish their ugliness. Most of the four, perhaps, he would feel the temptation to run away. If the baby were hungry and he had nothing to give it, the situation would indeed be an ugly one,

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's "Life of Johnson," ed. Birkbeck Hill, 1887, Vol. II., p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Adler's "Will to Power."

but uglier still if he deserted it and let it starve alone.

Most people would probably act from a blend of all four dispositions. Not what they did, but the way in which they came to do it, would be determined in each case by temperament.

Let us imagine a human fiend, like Iago, turning away from the baby—one who has outgrown the primitive ego-centric poise of mind; who clearly distinguishes between his own and other people's interests and where they clash deliberately prefers his own. If he were a man of feeling, he would feel the baby's cries with the baby, hate it for making him uncomfortable, for disturbing his own pleasurable emotional state. He would banish it from his view as a hostile object which did him a mental injury.

If a man of thought, he would think out the situation, reflect upon the various possible modes of action and decide upon whichever promised best to further his aims of the moment. (This strikes us, by the bye, as being most like the real Iago.)

If a man of action, and the baby were too weakly a specimen to promise to do him credit, he would assert himself master of the situation by abandoning it.

If an artist, and the baby were deformed and dirty, he would simply run away and banish it from his mind as an ugly and displeasing object.

The affection of mankind has always been captivated by the man of feeling, while its admiration has been excited by the man of action. The popular hero is generally a blend of the two, beloved if his feeling be good, feared if it be bad. Nelson is a good instance of the popular hero who was predominately a man of feeling, a man whose character was so lovable, his deeds so brave, that they will bear minute inspection. There is, in his case, no need for the "imaginative amplification," the "legendary hue" which, as Sir

Alfred Lyall says, usually helps in the transformation of the man into the hero.<sup>1</sup> His very faults are such as endear him to every generous nature.

As a man of action, he was in his element directing the naval campaign against the most powerful enemy we have had till recent times. Persevering, undaunted, prompt, sagacious, he showed all the qualities of a great commander of men.

As a man of feeling, he was in his element when off duty enjoying the comradeship of his junior officers or expressing his passionate and enduring love for Lady Hamilton. His was one of those ardent natures overflowing with love, ready to attach itself to every suitable object, to find every woman adorable, every man a "good fellow"; but emotionally he was childish with a large trace of that infantile fixation to the mother described in an earlier chapter.<sup>2</sup> Such a childish trait in a man's love for a woman precludes a full-bodied jealousy. He is jealous as a child is jealous, but not in the exclusive way that belongs to mature sexuality. If he be of a generous disposition he is ready to share his adored mistress with others, much as a child is ready to share his mother with brothers and sisters. Nelson shared Lady Hamilton's love during her husband's life-time, and lamented his death without a trace of hypocrisy.<sup>3</sup> He expected his wife to share him with his mistress, and could never really understand why she refused. His love was childish and, like a child's, unashamed. He pursued it in the full gaze of his scandalised country and in the sight of his God. He habitually acted on impulse, and impulse seemed to him, as to Blake and Shelley, to be divine, because his own impulses were mostly those of a deeply loving and generous nature. On one occasion he risked his life without a moment's hesitation to save a friend.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Asiatic Studies," Series I., 1899, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Mahan's "Life," 2nd ed., 1899, p. 555.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

He was not a thinker. He never set himself the task of thinking out the social consequences of his own line of conduct, and he was lacking in sense of beauty, that natural good taste which possibly keeps men of artistic nature from falling in love at all with women of Lady Hamilton's calibre, just as it certainly keeps them from conducting their love affairs or decorating their houses as Nelson did his.<sup>1</sup> He was driven to a certain amount of deceit in deference to a public opinion which did not really touch him, and to obligations of friendship which must have touched him more. It was more probably, however, the restraint he exercised upon his passion which brought out a neurotic symptom just before his definite breach with his wife. One day, shortly before this breach, he was out with a friend who was driving a well trained and perfectly controlled four-in-hand. "This is too much for me," said Nelson, "you must set me down."<sup>2</sup> The horses symbolised certain tendencies repressed in the unconscious of which he was afraid.

His disposition to neurosis showed itself also in his irritability and his impatience with people who touched upon the repressed systems of feelings and ideas in his unconscious mind. "He is a man of strong passions and his prejudices are proportionate," said Lord Radstock, who knew and admired him;<sup>3</sup> and Lord Minto, another of his friends, said of him that he was "in many points a really great man, in others a baby."<sup>4</sup> His insatiable vanity, and appetite for the admiration which Lady Hamilton gave him, was part of his childish longing to be approved. He was able all his life to live on impulse with so few disasters because his impulses were mainly good. Lady Hamilton was herself a creature of impulse to a great extent, and had thrown off certain restraints which Nelson still allowed to gall him. Perhaps he projected his own goodness of

<sup>1</sup> Mahan's "Life," 2nd ed., 1899, p. 536.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 449.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 433-434.

heart on to her, or perhaps, as seems much more probable, he found there a similar responsive goodness. They did not educate each other much, since their glaring faults were too alike, but they gave each other the ardent affection each craved from some idealistic and heroic lover.

The popular hero is not always loved, however. As a type of the man of action, whose feelings were bad, and who was in consequence feared and even hated, we may take St. Romualdus, the founder of the Camaldoli and other hermit communities in Italy, born in 950.<sup>1</sup> Like his predecessor, St. Columban, he was a man of untiring energy, indefatigable zeal and great sincerity. His desire for power was such that he must always be doing, and whatever he did he must do it with all his might. Secluded in a monastery, he expended his energies on digging the ground as well as on severe fasts. He sustained continual conflicts with the devil, who often "let loose the raging beasts of the vices." "Back, unclean dog!" Romuald would be heard shouting. "Vanish, old snake!"

His father, a member of an illustrious Ravenna family, had entered a monastery, but now repented and sought to return to the world. Romuald determined to go to the aid of his father's imperilled soul, and he set out for Ravenna. He had such a reputation for prodigious austerities, and hence for miracles, that the people of his neighbourhood were reluctant to let him go, and even tried to waylay and murder him, so as to get his miracle-working corpse for the protection of their land. He escaped their toils, however, and joined his father, whom he found still seeking to return to the world. "He tied the old sinner's feet to a beam, fettered him with chains, flogged him, and at length by pious severity so subjugated his

<sup>1</sup> Vita Romualdi by his contemporary, Peter Damiani, quoted H. O. Taylor, "The Mediæval Mind," 1911, Vol. I., Chap. XVI., from whom this account is taken.

flesh that with God's aid he brought his mind back to a state of salvation."<sup>1</sup>

We read of him elsewhere that "it was his passion to change men to anchorites: he yearned to convert the whole world to the solitary life." Many were the hermit communities which he established. But he could not endure his hermit sons for long, nor they him. "He seemed inspired with a superhuman power of drawing men from the world," says his biographer and colleague; and continuing a rhapsody of admiration, "What fruitage of souls the Lord won through him, pen cannot describe nor tongue relate. From all directions men poured in. . . . For this most blessed man was as one of the Seraphim, himself burning with the flame of divine love and kindling others wherever he went with the fires of his holy preaching." One can sympathise with the Marquis of Tuscany, who declared, "Not the emperor nor any mortal man, can put such fear in me as Romuald's look. Before his face I know not what to say nor how to defend myself nor find excuses."

Such a man was bound to have enemies. Some, indeed, "declared that the wicked old man ought to be hanged from a gallows, others that he should be burned in his cell."

Romuald was invincible. He was incapable of admitting himself in the wrong; whatever happened, he always triumphed. When the worm turned at length and his much-tried brethren got the authorities to forbid him from celebrating Mass, it seemed as though his pride must be humbled; but no, he took his punishment with a meek humility; it was, he said, an instance of that persecution which the righteous must expect in this wicked world at the hands of the ungodly. So effectively did he turn his enemies' flank by adopting the rôle of martyr that they surrendered.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 374, 375.

Romuald's was an extreme type, but we all know him ; and he still is apt to be drawn to the mission field of one kind or another, where he imposes his own convictions upon all but the bravest. Love of power is his ruling passion. He is neither a thinker, nor a lover of beauty. His feelings are strong, but hatred predominates. It was the flame of hatred, not love, that made him burn like the Seraphim ; his love was repressed into the unconscious along with his animal appetites. His fleshly desires were strong, and he was unmerciful to the animal in himself. It followed that he was unmerciful to others.

Love, as St. Bernard saw, begins with the body. He never let his begin at all, or if he loved in early youth he strangled his love as he grew to manhood. The reign of hatred in his mind was the result of severe repression, for evidently he had the power of loving—fleshly desires cannot exist in the soul of man without the accompaniment of loving impulse. His thirst for mastery, directed inwards towards self-conquest, gave a twist to his nature and increased the conventional horror with which he regarded the "raging beasts of the vices."

We should expect to find that he had dreams full of the child-like love he had left behind in his conscious life. The unconscious mind of this terrible old man might have been susceptible to the appeal of a simple, loving nature. An Anselm might have roused his dormant gentleness as he roused it in the harsh old abbot with whom he remonstrated for beating his boys. "Would you like it," said Anselm, "if you were what they are, to be treated as you treat them?"<sup>1</sup> Romuald *would* have liked it, but Anselm's further plea might have softened him. "If you give an infant solid food you will choke it. The strong soul delights in strong meat, . . . but the weak and tender in God's service need milk ; gentleness from

<sup>1</sup> Dean Church, "Life of St. Anselm," 1898, pp. 91-93.

others, kindness, mercy, cheerful encouragement, charitable forbearance."

The giants of thought do not make a personal appeal to popular sentiment as do the heroes of action. They are known by their achievements, not by their personalities. It takes all Browning's eloquence to convince us of the heroic quality of strenuous thinking, as he tries to do in "A Grammarian's Funeral."

He says of this hero of thought that :

"—before living he'd learn how to live—

No end to learning :

Earn the means first—God surely will contrive

Use for our earning.

Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes :

Live now or never !"

He said, "What's time ? Leave Now for dogs and apes !

Man has Forever."

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,

Ground he at grammar ;

Still, thro' the rattle, parts of speech were rife :

While he could stammer.

He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be !

Properly based *Ouñ*—

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,

Dead from the waist down.

Here's the top peak ; the multitude below

Live, for they can, there :

This man decided not to Live but Know—."

Bury this man there ?

and so on.

Even after these ringing lines some of us are only half-convinced. After all, we think, was he not somewhat inhuman ? What does it really matter how the Greeks used the enclitic *d* ? So little are we imbued with a love of learning !

If we ever became aware of the dangers to our very civilisation which spring from the vague and undeveloped thinking of the unconscious mind, of the continually threatened relapse into savagery which alone is averted by generations of strenuous thinkers, and of the way

in which all branches of knowledge hang together, so that no progress is made in any one of them without all alike benefiting, we should then see that "hoti's business" is really very much our business, and view the thinker in a different light.

As a typical thinker, we may refer our readers to Hegel, whose even and uneventful life was devoted to deductive thought for the purpose of furthering knowledge; or to Darwin, whose life-long, patient observation of facts and pursuit of inductive trains of reasoning has already been noticed.

Darwin also illustrates a repressed unconscious conflict between the rival claims of thought and feeling, between love of knowledge and love of goodness. In living the life of a scientific recluse he obeyed the strong bent of his nature, but always as it were in defiance of his humanitarian and ethical feeling. He was a man of science because his pleasure in the pursuit of knowledge outweighed his other desires, but love of his fellow men urged him to serve them in more immediate and tangible ways. He believed that he had reconciled his mode of life with his sense of duty, but he never did so completely. There were factors left in the unconscious belonging to two opposing camps where their conflict affected his peace of mind and health of body. Such a conflict is typical of naturally dutiful minds with a strong bent in some direction which does not appear to them as directly serviceable to their fellow men. They are inclined to suspect that an occupation which is pleasant cannot also be right. They would "scorn delights and live laborious days," but are uneasy about laborious days which happen to be their chief delight. Darwin did humanity a unique and priceless service, but he was subject to a lingering suspicion that he had neglected their needs to pursue his own interests.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Life," by his son. The psycho-analytic view of the importance of Darwin's father-complex supplements but does not contradict

Coming now to the temperament of the artist, we see it very clearly in Michael Angelo;<sup>1</sup> sculptor, painter and poet, with whom it asserted itself in childhood in spite of parental beatings. His genius was the artist's genius and ruled his life in spite of all the inner conflicts of a nature at war with itself. Like Milton, he had in him a strain of the Puritan, an immense desire for spiritual perfection, which expressed itself in the symbols of a simple religious faith. Both were inclined to accept without question the moral code of the devout and earnest people of their time, but both threw it over unhesitatingly when it came into conflict with the spontaneous feelings of the great artist in their souls.

Milton, though a Puritan, wrote a masque, and worshipped at the shrine of Shakespeare. Michael Angelo though he belonged to that school of thought which was later to produce the Puritan, painted a cartoon of Leda in the embrace of the swan. In his old age he painted the Last Judgment in the spirit of the ancient myth that makes a serpent flee from a naked but bite a clothed man. To him the naked human figure symbolised the naked soul. But when the prurient and lascivious hangers-on of the Papal Court got the Pope to bid him drape his figures, he gave a pupil the task without a murmur, scarcely noticing, for their arrow pierced no joint of his harness.<sup>2</sup>

His life was spent in the worship, the study and the creation of the beautiful. Because he suffered, his work bears the impress of his suffering. The inner conflict which made his life so profoundly tragic (as Romain Rolland alone of his biographers fully recognises) in spite of its triumphant nobility, was the result of an unusual type of sexual or emotional nature in conflict with his inherited moral code. Like his

that given here. The weight of the father's authority might just as well have been on the side of science and against philanthropy.

<sup>1</sup> For facts quoted, see J. A. Symonds, "Life of Michael Angelo," and Romain Rolland, ditto.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Symonds, *op. cit.*, 3rd ed., 1901, Vol. II., p. 57.

"Captive" in the Louvre,<sup>1</sup> he was tied and bound with the fetter of unconscious slavery, a bond the power of which lay, not in its intrinsic strength—it is but a riband that the man's strong arm could burst with ease—but in the inability of the bemused unconscious soul to waken and free itself.

His unhappy and abject love-letters to a succession of beautiful youths might move the tears of men and of angels.<sup>2</sup> He never fell in love with a woman, and in the course of his one friendship with a woman his was the passive *rôle*.<sup>3</sup> Symonds has pointed out how masculine are all his women, as well as all his men.<sup>4</sup> Woman does not fascinate him by those of her qualities which are distinctively feminine, but by those very qualities of strength, endurance and creative power, which she displays in her distinctive way, while man also displays them in his.

He identifies himself with the strong suffering mother, the splendid and heroic prophetess, but he depicts no graceful and tender womanly form, because he was insensible to the appeal of such an one. When his unconscious mind runs riot, as it did in the accessories to the Sistine frescoes, it revels in the forms of strong young men and lusty children.

The conflict underlying all his work was the conflict between authority and desire. Desire, half realised and expressed, the other half repressed into the unconscious mind to eat its heart out in captivity, desire perpetual, unassuaged, baffled, and tortured by the titan Law. Here we have his unconscious tragedy. In another aspect the *rôles* of the protagonists are reversed. His "Victory"<sup>5</sup> in the Florentine Museum seems to symbolise spiritual desire, the embodiment of progress and all those godlike qualities of man that draw him upwards

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in J. A. Symonds, *op. cit.*, 3rd ed., 1901, Vol. II., p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> R. Rolland, *op. cit.*, p. 96, etc.

<sup>3</sup> R. Rolland, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> J. A. Symonds, *op. cit.*, 3rd ed., 1901, Vol. I., p. 267.

<sup>5</sup> Reproduced in R. Rolland, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

from the beast, triumphant over the Titan of the unconscious, the vague mysterious longings that belong to a barbaric past. And a doubt is expressed. *Had* he to be destroyed, the "old Adam"? Is not there a mistake somewhere? In his downfall have not the mighty fallen, and those worthy of a place in the City of Man-soul?

Michael Angelo's unconscious conflict showed itself in other ways as well. With all his "genius for taking pains," his immense desire for perfection, which kept him uninterruptedly strenuous throughout a long life, he was in himself incomplete, like his Titan, a mighty whole conceived but never finished. His secret self-dissatisfaction was deep. This incapacity for inner completion was unconsciously symbolised for him in the tomb of Pope Julius which he planned but never finished. The fates seemed to conspire against his finishing it, and it was throughout much of his life a haunting terror.<sup>1</sup>

The gentle, kindly Raphael, whose genius was so much less profound than his own, but whose nature was so much more harmonious and tranquil, excited his almost insane envy, an envy which he projected on to Raphael, saying that he was convinced that it was he who had brought him all the trouble over the unfinished tomb.<sup>2</sup>

His neurotic temperament was visible too in his savage outbursts of irritable temper,<sup>3</sup> his frequent un-called-for self-defence, his sudden panic flights on at least three occasions in his life when his duty obviously required him to stay,<sup>4</sup> and his almost suicidal neglect of his health.<sup>5</sup> The conflict with him was indeed what Jung finds it invariably to be in neurotic people, one between the uncriticised conventional morality of his

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Symonds, *op. cit.*, 3rd ed., 1901, Vol. I., pp. 128-144.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> See his letters to his nephew.

<sup>4</sup> J. A. Symonds, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 48, 154-5, 416.

<sup>5</sup> R. Rolland, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

group and his own unrealised, individual, sexual tendencies.

A word may be said here about the much abused "artistic temperament." The artist's temperament, whose specific character lies in the predominating love of beauty, may go along with any blend of other characteristics. In Michael Angelo's case it went with a deep natural piety and a "father-complex" which prevented him from ever thinking moral problems out for himself or arriving at an independent moral code. A man is neither more nor less of an artist for being, as was Michael Angelo, a conventionally moral man. In so far as he is an artist, in all cases his conduct will be actuated by his strivings towards the beautiful. It is commonly supposed that this is bound at times to conflict with his strivings towards the ethically good, but this is not clear. It may very well be that the good and the beautiful would be found upon closer observation to agree with one another. What is wrong with conventional morality is not its morality but its conventionality. Anyhow, the sort of moral conflict which is generally taken to be the artist in a man struggling with his morality is really another kind of conflict. It is more truly seen as a struggle between unconscious factors which belong to him as a man simply and not either as an artist or as a moral man. To illustrate by a well known example :

When Shelley debated whether he should or should not leave Harriet and marry Mary his mental conflict was partly in the unconscious mind. He saw himself torn between his love with all its ardent idealism, felt to be good, and the cruel and senseless tyranny of a conventional code of morals made to keep man a slave, reinforced by base and petty passions, such as Harriet's jealousy. There were unconscious factors in the problem, however, which he did not recognise ; his purely animal impulses, his impatient desire, which could not wait but must seize at the risk of injuring ;

that cruel and selfish element in the passion of love which aims, not at the good of the beloved, but at the egotistical satisfaction of the lover. Then, too, though he consciously despised the conventional moral code of respectable people, it had powerful allies in his unconscious mind. He raged against its tyranny just because it had a power over him, a power which came from some lingering trace of respect for it in his own soul. He could not view it calmly and dispassionately so as to see what there was to be said in its favour. He could not get outside it because it still unconsciously held him. If he had been able to bring these unconscious factors into consciousness he would have been in a position to make the wisest decision possible for him at the time, one which would have fully satisfied himself.<sup>1</sup>

In all this there was nothing peculiar to the artist.

The tolerance of the Public towards what are regarded as the characteristic moral failings of artists and men of genius is an expression of our unconscious judgment on matters of sexual morality. Its excessive leniency is compensatory to our more usual excessive harshness.

<sup>1</sup> This view, though he does not employ the terms of psycho-analysis, has been put with great insight by Mr. Clutton-Brock in "Shelley, the Poet and the Man."

## CHAPTER XVIII

R. BROWNING. HAMLET. THE BUFFOON, THE FOOL  
AND THE MODEST MAIDEN

*"It's wiser being good than bad ;  
It's safer being meek than fierce ;  
It's fitter being sane than mad."*—R. BROWNING.

IN the last chapter we tried to indicate the sort of light which may be thrown upon problems of human character by a study of unconscious motives. We distinguished four types of character corresponding with feeling, knowledge, power and beauty—the man of feeling, the man of thought, the man of action and the artist—and we illustrated these by distinctive examples. Though separable in thought, in real life these characteristics are blended, and we may here turn our attention to the *all round* type of character, and inquire how psycho-analytic theories bear upon our understanding of his nature.

Robert Browning is a good example of such an all-round man. He was a philosopher, a poet, a great lover and a man of the world. We shall not understand him as a poet unless we see how intimately his love of beauty was mingled with his joy in effort for its own sake, an effort which found its sphere in the domain of hard thinking. He was a man of feeling too, capable of passionate sympathy with individuals and causes, and his great interest in life was man, man in pretty well all his aspects, one might think, except the obvious. One feels that nothing would have bored Brown-

ing which in any way illustrated or revealed the problems of human nature. These problems had most fascination for him where they were most obscure. He loved to dig down to the bed-rock of humanity underlying deep and heavy soil, to sift out the little gold from a mass of mingled *débris*. He rejoiced in hard thinking as Blake rejoiced in fantasy-weaving, as a lawyer in the subtle intricacies of his case, as an athlete in exerting his strength. It was not the intrinsic value of the subject that made him work it out to the minutest detail once he had started on it, it was the desire for power, for the feeling of mastery over it. He must have had this feeling satisfied when he put down his pen at the close of the "Two Lawyers" in "The Ring and the Book" or of "Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau," whose very name leaves one tired. He pursues an argument or train of thought as a knight in single combat pursues his enemy, and does not leave it till he has conquered it.<sup>1</sup> He is in his element in the triumphant exercise of intellect, whether unconsciously shouting people down in argument, as his habit was, or consciously pursuing an intricate theme.<sup>2</sup> It is more amusing to achieve one's own than to look on at other people's conquests, and where his sense of power runs away with his pen, his poetry is dry. The artist in him prevents this from often happening. His feeling not only decides the topic, but directs the mode of his thought. He feels himself into the mind of the man or woman, whoever it may be, he is studying, and whatever interests them interests him. He thinks their thought. His appreciation of so many different kinds of people is due to his wide sympathy as a man of feeling, but he also has a purely scientific interest in them as a man of thought. He inquires *why* people

<sup>1</sup> "Subtle and vigorous intellects enjoy trying their strength on hard problems just for the sake of overcoming difficulties quite beyond the average man." Henry Sturt, "Principles of Understanding," 1914, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> See Chesterton, "Life of Browning," 1903, p. 113.

are as they are, and why things human happen as they do, and above all why men believe in God and what sort of God He is. He can dissect souls minutely, but never mercilessly, for his feeling ensures that he cannot long forget the point of view of the man whom he has under the microscope.

We may contrast Browning with Shakespeare, whose many-sidedness he rivals. Shakespeare as a rule exhibits obvious types of character in stock situations (it is doubtful whether even Hamlet presented any puzzle to the people of his time), and by the intensity of his feeling he raises the interest in their situation to so high a degree that they win the sympathy of all.

Browning's capacity for feeling was more limited; it was not equal to the obvious. He is interested in people because of the intellectual problems they raise, and they arouse his sympathy most when they stimulate his sense of power by challenging him to understand them, to find in them something with which to sympathise. It is the commonplace, not the obvious, that appeals to him most, as he shows by his choice of characters, of symbols, and similes. Commonplace people are not "obvious" but "ordinary," not striking but inconspicuous, easily overlooked. They are emphatically mixtures, neither one thing nor the other. They are too self-contradictory, too indeterminate, to arrest attention. Their appeal to Browning is intellectual rather than emotional. Where, however, feeling predominates, it is deep and true.

His poetry seems to bubble up from the unconscious just where it shows most markedly the excess of his desire for power and the predominance of thought over feeling, where it is like a parody of itself. But some passages would also seem to bear the hallmark of the unconscious, which were written under the stress of deep emotion; these are passages of extraordinarily lyrical beauty inspired by his love for his wife. In "The Guardian Angel" he expresses love for a mother.

We imagine that his emotional or sexual nature was of the normal type and developed slowly, but without any arrest. He was all his life at home in his surroundings, and he would have been at home in any surroundings so long as there were people to study. Such natures have their inner struggles, but these are universalised and made conscious as they arise, and in Browning's case they were fought out in his writings on the conscious plane. The lives and letters of such men add little to our knowledge of their characters which are already revealed in their works. Browning's inner struggles were mostly those arising from his many-sidedness, the difficulty of harmonising his various tendencies, and above all the difficulty of harmonising a desire for power with love. Can God be all-powerful and all-loving too? That is for him the great question, reflecting his own conflict, made conscious as it arose.

His conflicts are solved, his doubts resolved, as far as human conflicts can be solved, that is provisionally, with a window of the soul left open for further light. He was growing till the moment of his death. His optimism was the result of his even, emotional development. He reminds us of Shakespeare, whom his contemporaries admired so much, but about whom they had so little to say.<sup>1</sup> There was little to say about Browning. When Tennyson descended from Olympus and was friendly to a mere human, the world around him was thrilled, but Browning rubbed shoulders with everybody. Like Shakespeare, he was an ordinary man, extraordinary in his genius and in his many-sidedness, but not in any other way.

Being human, of course he too had his repressions and resulting prejudices, but they were of a type so usual as almost to escape notice. A virile man living in a society which admired virility in men, he repressed into his unconscious mind his capacities for what he would have called effeminate weakness, that sort of

<sup>1</sup> See "Shakespeare's Centurie of Prayse," 2nd ed., 1879.

weakness of mind and body which he condemned under the head of "the morbid, the mawkish, the unmanly," and the hysterical.<sup>1</sup> He could be tender to such weakness in a woman, for there it was permitted by his conventional moral code, at any rate not regarded as disgraceful—but he could not understand it. In men it aroused his violent scorn, so that he raged and raved against it. Unconsciously, he hated it in his wife, and did not admit that it was less than disgraceful in a woman, but here his hatred encountered a love which, with his puritanical bias, he must needs fortify by "sense of duty," little as it needed such support. To repeat: he repressed a capacity in himself for the morbid and unmanly. This repression led him to a contempt of the morbid and unmanly in his wife. This contempt conflicted with his love and sense of duty, and was in turn repressed. An unconscious conflict went on amongst these unrecognised forces. Occasionally it burst into the conscious, as when he raged against Spiritualism, because of the bad effect it had on his wife's nerves, or against the sickly and unmanly feelings of loose artistic cliques, and still more when his wrath exploded against anyone who, like Edward FitzGerald, depreciated his wife, or like her would-be biographers, appeared likely to do so.<sup>2</sup> Such criticism stirred a "complex," a network of repressed ideas and emotions.

Browning was too all-round to captivate popular imagination. We are more readily interested in one-sided people who stimulate our curiosity by their unusualness while they flatter our self-esteem by their failings. Most people find life difficult because of certain inherent defects in their natures, and are unconsciously drawn towards men of genius whose work displays kindred defects. There is an intimacy in the

<sup>1</sup> "What had I on earth to do

With the morbid, with the mawkish, the unmanly."—"Asolando."

<sup>2</sup> See Chesterton, "Life of Browning," 1903, pp. 16, 93, 114, and "Life" by W. H. Griffin, in 1910, p. 292.

appeal they make which is lacking in that of the great all-round masters. Especially are we drawn to suffering, and inclined to think that in itself it makes the sufferer great. Our view reflects our unconscious wish that our own inner suffering may not be valueless.

It does not follow that because a man is of the all-round type he will be less liable than others to flaws in sexual development. His many-sidedness may seem a source of weakness rather than of strength, as with the Jack-of-all-trades who is master of none.

The most famous example of a man whose many sides seem to obstruct each other belongs to the realm not of history, but of fiction. A theory of unconscious motive is as applicable here as in real life. This is a point that need not be laboured, but we owe an apology on another account for venturing to illustrate our theme by Hamlet. Views of Hamlet (including the psycho-analysts' <sup>1</sup>) already fill a library, and it might not seem pertinent to add to them; but the subject still attracts students of human nature as a candle attracts moths; we singe our wings in a ceaseless file. The theme is irresistible, and if the following suggestions throw no light on Hamlet at least they may help to throw some on the psycho-analytic method of approach to any literary problem of human character.

The view of Hamlet as an example of the "Œdipus-complex" is not the only one open to psycho-analytic students. To the ordinary unsophisticated reader of Shakespeare rather than of Shakespeare commentaries, we doubt whether Hamlet has ever seemed puzzling. He himself is puzzled, but that is another matter. It is evident that he is no longer at all in love with Ophelia, and never could have been much in love with her; that he has little real feeling for his mother—no one whose love for his mother had the warmth of the infantile bond could have been so callous to her

<sup>1</sup> Pfister, "The Psycho-Analytic Method," 1916, p. 402; Freud, "Interpretation of Dreams," 1913, p. 224.

as was Hamlet in the scene where he kills Polonius.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that he is capable of friendship, and has affection for Horatio, and it is most of all evident that he idolises his dead father, vehemently insisting that he was a paragon of men, though everybody else in the play who has known him seems to think of him as a very ordinary mortal, and Hamlet himself is not surprised to learn that the ghost, which he believes indeed to be his father's spirit, is being purged in purgatory of "foul crimes."<sup>2</sup> There is no sign that he has any natural dislike for his uncle; on the contrary, he seems to feel his charm.<sup>3</sup> Hamlet was generally considered by those about him to have been cut out for the part of king,<sup>4</sup> and he himself admits that one of his uncle's offences was that he had "popped in between the election" and his own "hopes."<sup>5</sup> He conceives it to be his moral duty to avenge his father's murder, but he cannot bring himself to do so till the last act, and then only by accident.

I take it that one reasonable psycho-analytic explanation of his hesitation is as follows. His is an all-round type of character, suffering from an arrest of sexual or emotional development shown by his insensibility to the other sex. Women have little attraction for him, and his father rather than his mother was the object of his childish love. As he grew up and his ambition developed, his father became the object of unconscious hatred because he was his rival for the power of kingship. This repressed hatred rankles in his unconscious mind; in his conscious mind it is compensated by an exaggerated devotion. Consciously, he loves his father with a dutifully filial affection which prompts him to feel indignation at his mother's infidelity and his uncle's crime. Unconsciously, he hates him because he stood in the way of his ambition, and he is not shocked at his mother's fickleness or his uncle's murderous act.

<sup>1</sup> Act III., Sc. IV., 54, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Act I., Sc. V., 9.

<sup>3</sup> Act III., Sc. III.

<sup>4</sup> Act V., Sc. II., 353.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

Conscious motives prompt him to kill his uncle in obedience to the dictates of morality; these motives are mixed with another; he desires to kill his uncle in order to inherit the kingdom. The revolting selfishness of this last motive raises a doubt in his mind as to the cogency of the whole, which prompts him to leave well alone.

It is a favourite theme with Shakespeare, the mixed hatred and love of the son for the king-father whom he is ambitious to succeed.

The particular setting of Hamlet's character is probably the result of Shakespeare's own "father-complex" and of that emotional trend which is marked in his sonnets, where a man, not a woman, is the object of his passionate love. But the point of Hamlet's character is missed if we look for it in the "Œdipus-complex" or the "homosexual-complex" or any sexual complex. The point is exactly what it has always been seen to be by everybody except the German commentators. In psycho-analytic language, it is the unresolved conflict amongst unconscious trends of character, a will which is in unconscious bondage to conventional morality, and natural impulses which contradict each other. Each set of motives guides his conduct in turn and he never harmonises them. That way lies madness, and though in his case it was assumed, it bade fair to end by becoming real.

Any situation would have served for the setting of such a character. Had Shelley been a Hamlet he would have hesitated all his life between Harriet and Mary. There were three ways open to Hamlet for avoiding the gradual paralysis of will which we see growing on him; he might have elected to live by one set of impulses or another, as he does for brief moments, for instance, when ambition and self-assertion make him attack Laertes in the grave scene; or he might have stifled doubts and sacrificed himself to duty as conceived by his contemporaries; then he would have slain his uncle, punished his mother, and reigned in

their stead ; or he might have brought his emotional conflict to consciousness, have realised that his resolution was weakened, not merely by "the pale cast of thought," but by the vivid glow of feeling. His *impasse* would then have ended. He would have seen that while it was perfectly true that he loved his father and his father's memory, yet he had feelings of hatred against him for standing in the way of his own ambition ; that his father had not been a paragon of men but a man of rash and faulty disposition, who was even now receiving just Heaven's punishment for deeds of violence. He would have seen that though his uncle's crime revolted his moral sense, yet it gained a measure of his unconscious admiration for its courage and determination. And as for all his expressed horror of his mother's infidelity and the enormity of her "incest," he would have admitted that the moral turpitude of her conduct did not really touch him ; he could well understand her falling in love with his uncle, and women to him did not matter much one way or the other. Having taken his unconscious bearings, the fog would have lifted that surrounded his conscious motives and he could have gone forward.

Two other marked types of character upon whom our subject throws light are those of the buffoon and the Court fool. The buffoon, immortalised in Falstaff,<sup>1</sup> is one who defends himself against mental conflict by refusing to take anything seriously. The battle between the old and the new, between the flesh and the spirit, which all men are called upon to fight or risk their soul's atrophy, by him is successfully evaded, as is each particular conflict where his selfish interests clash with those of other people. It is obvious that such a slothful, selfish being would not be tolerated by his fellow-men unless he had some gift wherewith to compensate the harm he does them. This gift is

<sup>1</sup> The Falstaff of "Henry IV," parts I and II., not the Falstaff of the "Merry Wives."

his wit. Falstaff is quite unscrupulous, he will deceive his best friend to gain his ends—his own selfish greed and pleasure—but he is engagingly frank as to what those ends are. He echoes our own pleasure-loving unconscious wishes and thoughts, to which we are too timid or too “respectable” to give utterance. We love him because he says just what we ourselves feel. At least Prince Henry loves him. His wit eases our hearts and we could forgive him all his peccadilloes and worse for the boon of being made to laugh as he makes us. But when it comes to the point of choosing our way of life we must judge sternly, as did Prince Henry. “I know thee not, old man.”<sup>1</sup> Prince Henry’s much criticised conduct was unjust, not in the harsh verdict he pronounces in the coronation scene, but during the years in which he gave Falstaff complete license. Then he took his pleasure at the expense of Falstaff’s soul, and only began to consider its moral turpitude when he no longer needed amusement. The scene quoted grates upon us from the sudden introduction of a new category—the moral. If applicable to Falstaff now, why was it not applied before? Then there would have been no Falstaff; for the buffoon to be enjoyed must be taken out of the sphere of ethics. Shakespeare seems to commit a fault in taste, to show insensitive feeling, by bringing him into that sphere which is altogether inappropriate to Falstaff, though not to Prince Henry.

The typical Court fool, like the buffoon, evades conflict, but not by mirth-provoking wit, rather by refusing to be treated as a responsible being and trading on the unconscious mind. For one reason or another, he cannot fit himself in happily to his surroundings, so he falls back for a *modus vivendi* upon a childish, irresponsible attitude to life, opens the floodgates of unconscious speech and habitually says whatever comes into his head. His comments will often chime in

<sup>1</sup> “Henry IV,” Part II., Act V., Sc. V.

with the unconscious minds of his companions and give them the same sort of pleasure they would have received from boldly expressing their own.

The more exaggerated and emphatic a speaker becomes, the more certainly will there be feelings in his unconscious mind of an opposite or compensatory kind, and these are expressed for him spontaneously by the jester, who is in sympathy with his master's mood. Thus Lear in a vein of almost intolerable tragedy "O me, my heart, my rising heart! But down!" And the fool relieves the strain, "Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive," etc.<sup>1</sup> The "born fool" is a childish, dependent creature, emotionally and intellectually undeveloped, unable to take his place in the world as a man amongst men. He gives up trying to play the difficult game of life, sinks into the position of a spectator and keeps up a running commentary from the unconscious. He has no more self-control than a child. This is recognised and he is treated like a child, his master keeping a whip for him. At the same time, coming from the unconscious, his utterances sometimes have its peculiar magical qualities; they are supernatural and inspired, while occasionally he speaks words of miraculous wisdom, foretells the future, exposes criminals, or shows other faculties of the "medium" or the "clairvoyant."<sup>2</sup> On the whole, however, it is for his childish, irresponsible character that he is valued. He is first and foremost a "poor natural"—whatever else the unconscious may be it cannot be anything but natural. His patrons kept the fool as people at one time used to keep dwarfs and have always kept pet animals. They wanted something to take them off their stilts of propriety, reason and self-control, and to give them scope for indulging the kindly animal and childish instincts natural to them and repressed by a too exclusively conscious habit of mind.

<sup>1</sup> "King Lear," Act II., Sc. IV.

<sup>2</sup> See Ennemoser, "History of Magic," trans. 1893. Vol. I., p. 80.

The professional was sometimes a fool by nature, sometimes one "wise enough to play the fool," who put on motley in order to gain a comfortable livelihood by his wits, even sometimes to amass a fortune. No one could act the part successfully who had not the run of his own unconscious mind.

One more marked type of character may be glanced at; that of the superlatively pure and modest maiden, a type common enough in fiction and legend, but hardly to be met with in real life. If she ever existed in the flesh she stands in need of explanation even more than Hamlet. We may take as an example the Irish St. Bridget of the sixth century. The account is found in a fifteenth century manuscript.<sup>1</sup> Her chronicler writes as follows: "There hath never been anyone more bashful or more modest than that holy virgin; she never washed her hands or her face or her feet amongst men; she never spoke without a blush." In another place it is told of her that "she was so beautiful that all men desired her, and she prayed that her beauty might pass from her. So a distemper fell upon her and she lost an eye and became unsightly. But when she received the veil, the lost eye and her former beauty returned to her."

St. Bridget's modesty is of concern to thousands of individuals to-day. Girls brought up in many convent schools are still taught never to take a bath naked, and this on grounds of modesty. St. Bridget herself is explained elsewhere in the chronicle, for we read that she was impulsive, warm-hearted, hospitable, generous, innocent, abstinent and extraordinarily absent-minded. "Often when dinner-time arrived, Bridget had given away the milk and butter to passing tramps and the bacon to the dog." On one occasion, "waiting for her father in his chariot, she gave away his sword; all she had to say in self-defence was that if beggars asked for her king and father, she would give him

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in "Dedications etc. of Churches," Francis Bond, 1914, pp. 97 and 170.

away also." After all, St. Bridget was a delightful and on the whole a natural girl with a sexual repression not uncommon to girls growing into womanhood with vigorous bodies and sensitive minds. There is a conflict in the growing girl's unconscious mind between the desire to grow up and be a woman and bestow herself upon a man, and the desire to remain a child under the protection of her father.<sup>1</sup> The father is both loved and hated, other men are felt to be both attractive and terrifying, the desire to attract them by the display of personal beauty is in conflict with the desire to escape their notice. In Bridget's case, and, alas! in our own day in very many cases, the unconscious conflict is increased by the inculcation of this false notion of maidenly modesty, and neurotic illnesses not infrequently result. It is the outcome of the belief common to the rank and file of the Middle Ages, but not to its greatest spirits, that fleshly love is in itself evil and a hindrance to the love of God, a belief which has both allies and assailants in the girl's own undeveloped unconscious mind. Excessive modesty is with Bridget a neurosis in an otherwise healthy character; normal it could never be, but it is to this day encouraged and even demanded by a public opinion which regards morality itself as abnormal, as an elaborate and artificial external structure built through the course of ages and in peril of destruction at any moment from the forces of natural evil. Egregious maidenly modesty is one of the fictions demanded in defence of this Moloch of virtue, and demanded by people whose conduct is guided sometimes by their innate love of good, which never having fully developed they never dare completely trust, sometimes by its inverted or neurotic form, their fear of evil.

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Constance Long's paper on "Psycho-analysis in Relation to the Child," *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*, 1915.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CONCLUSION. THE FUTURE PROSPECT

*" Still we say as we go  
    ' Strange to think by the way  
    Whatever there is to know  
    That we shall know one day.' "*

—D. G. ROSSETTI.

To the student of psycho-analysis the future is full of hope. He sees in the new understanding of man's unconscious mind, which we have tried to indicate in the foregoing pages, a factor of immense importance in human progress; one which will not change its direction, but which will accelerate its speed. Psycho-analysis, like education, is a means of enlightenment; it enlightens man's ignorance on the subject of his own hidden and unconscious motives; it reveals to us why we act as we do, individually and socially, and it enables us to conduct our lives henceforth more effectively in accordance with our conscious purposes.

In our view, the future of psycho-analysis is mainly within the sphere of education. A course of psycho-analytic tuition, we venture to think, will come to be regarded as an essential part of an education in the "humanities." When that time arrives we shall have entered upon a new epoch of human history not unlike that on which man embarked when first he became conscious of his own ultimate purposes. Let us glance at the effect which we imagine will be produced upon the individual and upon society.

The individual, who is introduced to the "hinter-

land" of his own conscious being, finds there those unwelcome desires and tendencies which he has banished from the comity of the conscious, kept, as it were, in rebellious subjection. The bulk, however, of the inhabitants of this hinterland are not outlaws from the conscious, but indigenous barbarians, good material but untrained, and, like all primitives, "tied and bound with the chain" of their conventions. Their influence on everyday life is seen in human inconsistency.

It is common enough to meet with people whose desires and actions are in mutual contradiction. They long for a simple life, but set about building themselves large houses; they obviously enjoy making people happy, yet spend their time in trying to make them virtuous; they outrage the social conventions, and yet depend for their happiness upon social approval; they value leisure above most things, yet give themselves little or none. There are very many forms of such self-contradiction. Matthew Arnold depicts one.

"Her life was turning, turning  
In mazes of heat and sound,  
But for peace her soul was yearning."

Her desire for peace and quiet was genuine, and yet she did not enter a nunnery or bury herself in a country cottage; she pursued the profession of a dancer. In all such cases the explanation is to be found in unconscious motive.

The natives of the unconscious hinterland are not completely cut off from consciousness. It is their pressure reinforcing conscious motives which turns the scale and determines our action; it is they who lead us to build ourselves large houses, to inculcate virtue in others, to shock people to no purpose, to fill our lives exclusively with work, to do, in short, the very things which seem to prevent us from being happy.

Through psycho-analysis we open up communications with the unconscious, we educate, civilise, recognise, and come to terms with all our natural propensities, good and bad. The bad, especially, are safer when known and

dealt with. The energy which they formerly absorbed is now to a certain extent available for kindred but harmless purposes. Even hatred, when made conscious, may be turned to good account. Hatred, so long as it is in the unconscious, rankles and festers and breaks out in murderous acts; our "words may be sweeter than honey," unconscious hatred sees to it that "yet are they very swords." Conscious hatred may be universalised and so made a useful auxiliary of the leading purposes of life which are beneficent and constructive. Hannibal's reasonable hatred of the tyranny of Rome, and Parnell's of the tyranny of England, inspired their life-work, but in each case that life-work was marred by unconscious motives. To Hannibal Rome, and to Parnell England, stood unknown to himself as a symbol of his own unconquerable pride which ruthlessly trampled on his gentler instincts. Had either become conscious of the complete nature of his desire for revenge his life would have taken a different colour, if not a different course—a different tone and temper would have pervaded it; personal bitterness would have disappeared, and the zeal of moral indignation have been heightened.

The love of power which plays so large a part in our lives, acting as an unconscious motive often enough appears in the guise of philanthropy and patriotism, turning them into oppression and tyranny. Made conscious, it may move to an appropriate sphere where it co-operates with higher motives; thus the cruel disciplinarian who injures the souls of the group over whom he rules may organise and control their pumps and engines to the benefit of all. Or this same love of power may be turned against its own abuse—the thief be set to catch the thief. The most effective champion of freedom is he who has known the taste of tyranny, his own or another's. Only those people can feel the injuries of others passionately who have some latent capacity for inflicting injury—it may be on themselves.

The soul of man once acquainted with its own

unconscious elements approximates to an ideal democracy ; co-operation is substituted for conflict, harmony for discord, the good of the whole including the good of each part supersedes the exclusive good of certain sections. All that is useful is recognised as such, and allowed freedom to develop ; all that is pernicious is left without punishment or malediction to make such terms as it may with the superior forces of good ; terms which do no injury to the whole and are compatible with mercy.

To translate from general to more particular terms : the man who has become familiar with the workings of his unconscious mind tends to lose his prejudice, his superstition, his unreasonableness in all its forms, including that of logical fallacy. He tends to be a promoter of good rather than a destroyer of evil. His zeal increases with his tolerance ; he sees people from their own point of view as well as from his, and realises how the two fit in ; and he aims at achieving the things he really cares for most.

He has arrived at a better understanding of himself. A large part of our failure to understand each other is due to our failure to understand ourselves. It is the unknown and dreaded forces of our unconscious minds which distort our views of other people and lead to hatred-without-understanding, that great bar to fellowship.

Because man is by nature moral, enlightenment promotes morality, and a common moral enthusiasm is above all things felt as a bond of union amongst men, a solvent of barriers, individual, social and racial. Here we find an object upon which we are all at one ; we all desire to be good, to further moral goodness. The founders of religions have been moral enthusiasts, and as such have appealed to humanity at large with an appeal which transcends the limits of race and time.

Psycho-analysis will bring a new impetus to religion by revealing more clearly the greatest secret of each man's heart, his love of goodness.

So much for the effect on the particular man *quâ* individual. Let us now inquire how it is likely to influence his character as a member of society, a social being. As with Plato, so with us, the ideal society reflects the organisation within a man's own soul. The good citizen is one who fulfils his function as citizen within a good state, a state wherein the good of each is the good of all. In one sense, it is impossible for anyone to-day to begin to lead a satisfactory life as a social being, for the good state does not exist. The good citizen must employ his energies in bringing it into existence. The point is made clearer by a military analogy. It would not be possible for a soldier to lead a satisfactory military life who belonged to an army in which the rank and file were kept weak in body and dull in mind, while the officers divided their time between enforcing discipline and pursuing their private occupations. The good soldier would find that one of his tasks was to try to get the condition of the army altered. This is no exaggerated simile wherewith to compare our social and industrial system. It is impossible to lead a satisfactory life as a social being while the society to which we belong contains a vast sore of degraded poverty, together with the stagnant and undeveloped lives of the mass of the workers. The rank and file of the industrial army are kept literally weak in body and dull in mind.

Society as a whole is in the position of the man who earnestly desires one thing and bends his efforts to securing its opposite. As in the case of the individual, so here, the explanation lies in the operation of unconscious motives. We labour under a popular delusion that our industrial organisation is a giant machine, a delusion as subjective and chimerical as that of the primitive network of taboos, or the medieval dangers of witchcraft. It seems to us as though, without foreseeing the results of our actions, impelled by blind forces, we have created and set in motion a colossal engine which now we can neither direct nor stop. But the engine is

ourselves in our collective capacity, it acts and moves only in the direction in which each one of us individually impels it. How is it, then, that it assumes the form of a veritable Frankenstein's monster, one whom we have brought to birth and cannot control? The student of the unconscious answers: because the energy that moves it is largely that of unconscious motives—of love of power, and luxury in the classes, sloth and the craving of appetite in the masses. So far as motives are unconscious, they are *not* within our control, and a magical, supernatural, or divine character has always been attributed by man to forces, whether external or within himself, which he cannot direct and does not understand.<sup>1</sup> Civilisation consists in extending the sphere of human control over force, mental as well as physical.

To the primitive, all force including impulse is magical. He can no more resist the promptings of the cruel and destructive spirit than of the beneficent and cherishing. A divine or magical character was long attributed to the ravings of the drunkard and of the insane because these are the work of the unconscious and so beyond the man's control. A similar air of fatality is felt to belong to this modern chimera of the industrial machine, and will linger about it, until we bring into consciousness the discreditable motives which impel us to create it. Then our will can be brought to bear upon them, and man will begin to be the master of his fate socially as well as individually. We shall no longer allow things to go on which none of us desire, we shall know what we do desire, and aim at it without unconscious hindrance. Here, again, because man is innately moral, socially as well as individually, an increase of enlightenment will lead to improved social and industrial conditions. So long as the motives which impel our social actions are in the unconscious, they seem outside ourselves, part of the un-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. The legal phrase "Act of God" which implies that God acts wherever force is exhibited beyond our control and obeying no discovered uniformity.

alterable Will-of-God or Laws-of-Nature. When these motives are made conscious, we see ourselves as agents, not as victims, carrying out the Will of God in our conscious purposes, ourselves and those purposes alike embodiments of Natural moral Law.

Social ills are reflected in individual lives. No man of feeling can live contentedly in a world which is marred by so much preventible suffering, while the lives of many of the rich are full of inner discontent due to unconscious conflict between love of power and love of God and neighbour. We fail to realise human fellowship in the various social groups to which we belong, just as we fail to realise fellowship amongst the warring activities of our inner selves, and the two failures are connected.

All the evils touched on are slowly, very slowly, being put right in the course of human evolution, and psycho-analysis, as here seen, is a valuable reinforcement to the powers of progress. It leads to a new point of view, a fresh method of approaching human problems, a wider hope. It blends enthusiasm for the wisdom of the ancients with eager appreciation of new ideas. It seizes truth in every form discernible, and values it both for its intrinsic value and also for its application to life. It wages war against ignorance, egotism, hatred and selfishness, and against sloth with its high-priesthood of formalism, because man himself is a warrior enlisted in an army which exists to fight the arch-enemies of his progress.

"There is no reason," says Hobbes, "for any man to think himself wiser to-day than yesterday, which does not equally convince he shall be wiser to-morrow than to-day." The student of the unconscious looks back and rejoices at the fuller knowledge of to-day, looks forward and rejoices at the unlimited vista of ever-growing knowledge in the future. He has re-found a clue to the meaning of the universe which, while it does not solve its riddles, shows the direction in which

they are continually being solved. He sees the march of progress from the animal to the divine, from the instinctive to the rational, the conventional to the moral, the chaotic to the planned. Primitive man, like the savage, lived in a world where objects of thought were few, but the recognised principles connecting them were innumerable, arbitrary and vague. To-day we live in a world where the objects of thought are innumerable, but the recognised principles connecting them are ever tending to become simple, few and illuminating.

In the sphere of sexuality, which looms so large in the unconscious, the primitive has indeed no sexual morality proper, only a set of customs.<sup>1</sup> With one tribe it is nefarious to marry outside your family, with another to marry within it. With one, the social duty of securing a good harvest is performed by means of profligacy, with another by means of continence.<sup>2</sup> If a man would know whether an act is right or wrong, he must refer to an elaborate and chaotic code of tribal rules fully known only to the few, and he must consult the will of a moody and capricious God, which is only to be guessed at by those who have the gift. The unwitting breach of any rule, the unintentional offence of the God, brings calamity on the tribe. In place of all this, the man of to-day applies one simple principle of conduct, the principle of love—love of mankind and of individual men, love of goodness and of God.

We advance unevenly, as it were in sections, thought outstripping conduct, and feeling lagging behind both; but when the unconscious mind comes to be studied and understood and its desires and dispositions are better known, then our actions, social and individual, will be just as rational and humane as our truest thoughts and feelings, and no more so. We shall cease to regard Man as a being who has to be kept moral by

<sup>1</sup> Jung says this somewhere with less truth of the present day.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, "The Magic Art," 1911, 3rd ed., Vol. II., Chap. XI., see also *supra*, Ch. XIV., p. 188.

doctrines instilled into him in youth, and by habits which he has been induced to form. We shall recognise that human conduct is the inevitable outcome of innate desires and impulses whether these be conscious or unconscious. Once remove the barrier which prevents their realisation, and so resolve the conflict amongst unconscious mutually jarring motives, then action, belief and sentiment keep pace with one another, and every deed of man becomes the spontaneous expression of a unified personality.



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